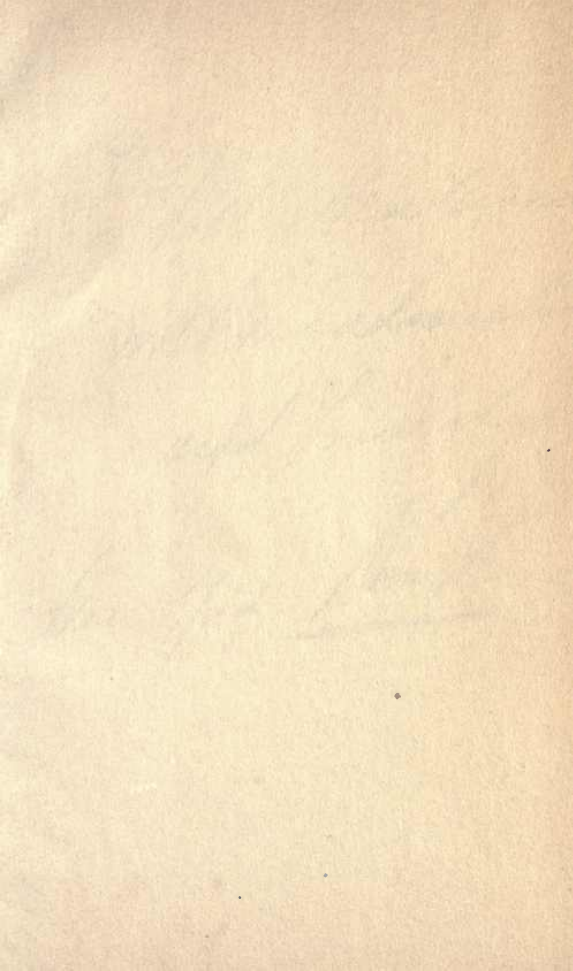
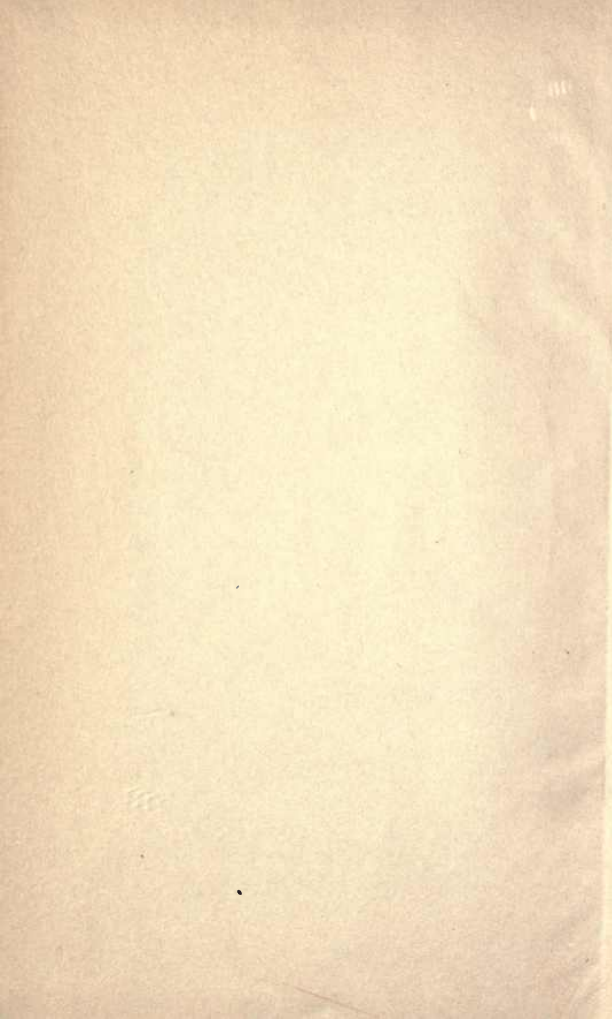


SPRING FLOWERS
AND ROWEN



DORIS KENYON
by
JAMES B. KENYON

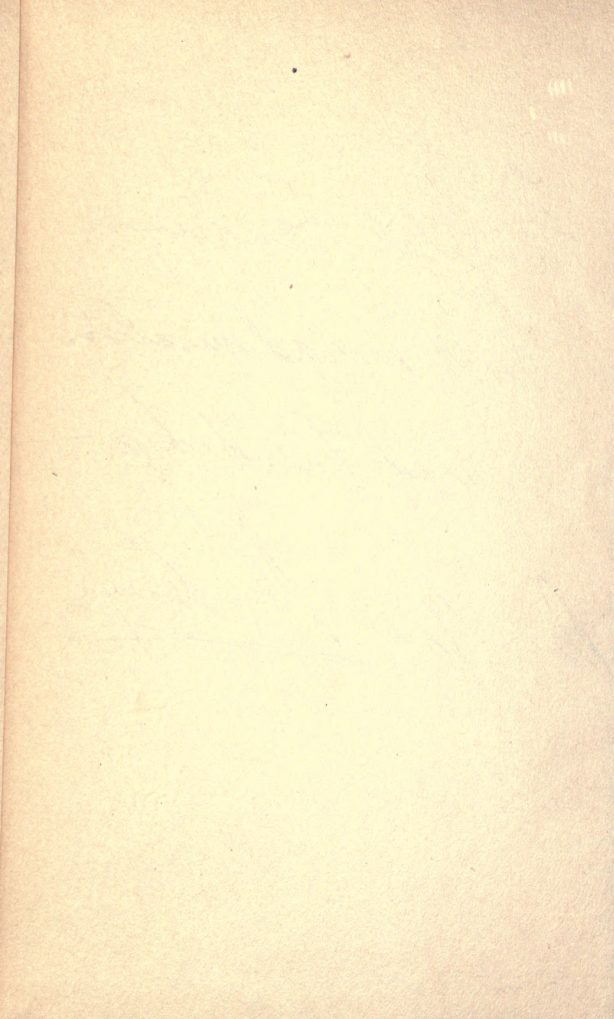




To Mr Henderson
with my admiration
and friendship—

Dec. 1912 Louis Luykth

Auth. res.
Copy



SPRING FLOWERS
AND
ROWEN

BOOKS BY MR. KENYON.

In Prose

LOITERINGS IN OLD FIELDS
REMEMBERED DAYS
RETRIBUTION

In Verse

THE FALLEN AND OTHER POEMS
OUT OF THE SHADOWS
SONGS IN ALL SEASONS
IN REALMS OF GOLD
AT THE GATE OF DREAMS
AN OATEN PIPE
A LITTLE BOOK OF LULLABIES
POEMS
REED VOICES
THE HARVEST HOME. *Collected Poems.*

Spring Flowers

AND

Rowen

BY
DORIS KENYON
AND
JAMES B. KENYON



JAMES T. WHITE & CO.
NEW YORK
1922

Spring Flowers

AND

Rowen

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DORIS KENYON

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JAMES B. KENYON



JAMES T. WHITE & CO.

NEW YORK

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BY JAMES B. KENYON & DORIS KENYON

ANTICIPATION.

TO MY DAUGHTER DORIS.

No rose can shut and be a bud again;
Sometime, my darling, you will understand
Why I am greedy of these moments when
Against my breast I hold your little hand,
And watch the curves and dimples of your face,
And all your beauty and your flower-like grace.

For the swift current of the ceaseless years
Shall bear you on their bosom to life's main,
Where tempests rage and hearts grow sick with fears,
And the black shadow waits whose name is Pain;
Then this sweet brow shall wear a crown of care,
And I, my dear one, I shall not be there.

O tender feet, the way is rough and steep;
O violet eyes, your vigils must be long;
So while I may, in love's nest let me keep
My precious baby safe from any wrong;
Kiss me with lips still pure and undefiled,
For sometime I shall lose you, O my child.

J. B. K.

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SPRING FLOWERS

BY

DORIS KENYON

THE END OF THE ROAD

Ah! 'tis in sight at last—
The end of the long, long way;
The toil and the travail are past;
The night falls, cool and grey.

Where are the comrades boon
With hearts to adventure addressed,
Who greeted the morning and noon
With laughter and song and jest?

Onward I go with dauntless feet
To the end of the last far mile—
In my heart one memory sweet,
And the light of a deathless smile.

SERENADE

Is it a dream of the dawn,
Or the moon behind the hill,
Or the marsh-fire's glow that pales
On the fenlands dark and still?

Or is it the dogwood shakes
Its brede of shimmering stars
In the long dim aisles where the night-moth
Crosses the shadowy bars?

Here in the cool sweet grass,
Damp with the beaded dew,
I wait for the glimmer of warm white hands
And the silver voice of you.

THE COLUMBINE

Like a jewel trembling
At a lady's ear,
In this lonely woodland place,
Lo! I found thee, dear.

Among the dazzling beauties
In haunts of royalty,
E'en in the courts of Solomon,
None was arrayed like thee.

THE HERMIT THRUSH

He sent from out the hollow dusk
His bell-like vesper call,
And through the twilight's dews and musk
Like prayer it seemed to fall.

Then the small creatures, born of day,
Hid in their coverts deep,
While through the evening, cool and gray,
Night brought her gift of sleep.

THE LIVING PAST

"La passé n'est pas une chose morte."

The past is not a dead thing, ah, how true!
Though in a rose jar we would lay it by
And from each passing morn pluck blossom new
That in their turn at last must fade and die.
The past still lives: its tendrils creep and clasp
About our lives for ever more, and hold
Our days and hours within their tender grasp,
Like chains of steel or links of beaten gold:
Whether for weal or woe, we still must keep
The joy, the grief that seasons dark or bright
Have brought us, till across time's vasty deep,
Like a smile breaking through a shower of tears,
God's shining promise spans the cloudy years.

DANDELIONS

Laughing and careless, as of old,
The spendthrift summer, through the land,
Has passed and dropped these discs of gold
From out his idle hand.

THE DESPOILER

How fascinatingly cruel you are!
You wrench my thoughts away from me
When I try so hard to keep them.
You hold them up before you like colored toys
And laugh in bold derision
When you grind them under your heavy heel
In the cool of the evening I silently steal forth
And gather them up—
Poor crushed rose leaves.

THE SEEKER

Reprinted from "The Harvest Home"

He sought it in life's fresh and dewy morn;
In misty woodlands where the shadows lay;
In summer fields amid the ripening corn;
In meadows sweet with hay.

Nor khamsin winds nor winter's vulpine tooth
Could daunt him, nor a thousand anxious fears,
For still he sought the fount of endless youth
Through long and bitter years.

Nor did he find it on the hoary hills,
Among whose splintered crags he toiled in vain.
Where the long thunder rolls and torn cloud spills
Its cold and barren rain.

He sought it by the ocean's tawny sands;
Amid forgotten cities, gray and old;
Love could not woo him with her beckoning hands,
Nor friendship, fame nor gold.

Then to the desert turned his weary feet,
The unattained still luring all his soul,
Till his strained eyes athwart the dazzling heat
Beheld at length his goal.

And there he digged with heart grown old and seared,
Until he found the spring, when lo! he stood
Ringed round with mountains he himself had reared,
And perished in the solitude.

THE REFUGE

As autumn leaves whirl from the trees,
Or the last leaguered rose
Before the onset turns and flees,
When the fell north-wind blows;

Or as a butterfly is borne,
With rain-wet vans enmeshed,
High o'er the bowed and beaten corn
Midsummer hail has threshed;

So turns my heart, in storm and scath,
To find your sheltering breast,
Wherein to hide from scorn and wrath,
As in its own dear nest.

THE EVIL DEED

Its ever widening circles fold us all;
None can escape beyond its prisoning bound;
And howsoe'er we strive and weep and call,
Its fatal spell shall ring our footsteps round.

HIS NAME

'Twas fluted by the birds
In the hollow of the hills;
It chimed in the crystal bells
Of a thousand bubbling rills—

His name,—belovéd name!—
Which in my avid ears
Is sweeter far than all
The music of the spheres.

THE POOL ON THE PAVEMENT

Reprinted from "The Harvest Home"

All the long, dreary day the skies had wept,
Till o'er the world the night fell, hushed and cool,
Then dried their tears—and on the pavement slept
A little pool.

Within its mimic depths the sudden glare
Of swaying street-lamps scattered shimmering beams.
But once more in the dark it hid and there
Resumed its dreams.

O'erhead the clouds, unshepherded and wild,
Parted and fled to the night-hills afar,
And in the pool's dim sky dawned undefiled
One radiant star.

Anon a flower-decked bride passed on her way,
Her happy face reflected at her feet;
And a night-prowler, like a bird of prey,
Sped through the street;

And for an instant glimmered in the glass,
Like a pale wraith, his scarred and evil face,
Then, as a vapor vanisheth, did pass
And leave no trace.

A drunken woman, cradling in her arm
A wailing infant, staggered slowly on,
Glimpsed in the pool her image with alarm,
Cursed, and was gone.

But now the clouds roll from the sky's vast blue;
The noise and tumult of the city cease;
In the shrunk pool the star shines out anew,
And night breathes peace.

A TRAGEDY OF DAWN

Now on the hill the dewy-lidded dawn

Wakes from her sleep, and countless feathered throats
Break into song; fondling her nuzzling fawn

The soft-eyed doe hears the thin bell-like notes
Of distant bayings, then, with startled ears,

Leaps to her feet; now from the mountainside
The hounds give tongue more clearly, while her fears

Wring the poor mother's heart, and down the wide,
Cool intervale she leads her panting child,

Seeking some thicket deep where they may lie
In safety; vain the morning sweet and mild;

Alas! for them the hour has come to die.

METAMORPHOSIS

The while I breathed the night's elusive musk,
And caught the fragrance of the falling dew,
I saw a lily swaying in the dusk,
And lo! 'twas you!

THEIR GRAVES IN FRANCE

Silent they lie with upturned faces,
All white and cold and stark,
In the war-wasted, shell-torn places,
Wrapt in the tender dark.

Above, a linnet thrills his lay,
A clear-voiced threnody;—
They had their dreams of yesterday;
Tomorrow's faith have we.

No rumor of Time's ceaseless strife
Disturbs their house of rest;
What though they died?—they still have life,
Who gave the world their best.

BEYOND RECALL

The buds came, but my eyes were sealed;
The windflowers danced about my feet;
From leafy dell and smiling field
The vernal airs blew sweet.
Yet deaf and blind, with spirit bleak,
I passed upon my stolid way;
But when the first snow-flake smote my cheek,
I mourned for my lost May.

THE MOUNTAIN

Like a hooded nun it kneels,
While the dark sky o'er it broods;
Time, unceasing, round it wheels,
Vexing not its solitudes.

Cloud and shadow, storm and light—
These in turn have o'er it ranged;
Stars have gemmed its brow by night;
Change hath left it still unchanged.

Human passions, human fears,
Sorrow, strife, all pass it by—
Safe amid the weltering years,
Fixed in its eternity.

THE TEARDROP

Reprinted from "The Harvest Home"

A star slips softly from the sky,
In the hush of dusk, out of the blue;
It is God's teardrop, from on high,
For He has disappointments, too.

A BOLT FROM THE BLUE

In the cloud-shadowed hills
The thunder mutters low,
And falls from the arching blue
A sudden blinding blow.

Shattered and riven it stands,
Which but a moment since
Lifted its leafy crown
Proudly as any prince.

No more shall the birds nest there,
Nor its branches woo the sun; -
O stricken heart of me,
Thy day is also done.

THE PLAY .

And still the play goes on, nor ever palls—
 Laughter and comedy and mock despair;
But nightly, as the final curtain falls,
 Mirth doffs her mask to show the face of Care.

TO LOUISE VON FEILITZSCH.

O thou who, in the shadow of an hour
 When, in the doubtful scale of blame or praise
 Ambition quivered to defeat, couldst raise
A voice of cheer to give a faint heart power;
O thou who holdest as a priceless dower
 That golden largess which, forsooth, outweighs
 The richest gains of those whose empty days
Are passed in ignorance of Truth's white flower—
Receive this song as a poor testament
 Of that I feel, though yet it can but fail
To give e'en faintest voice to ardors blent
 With gratitude, and hope no longer frail;
For that to me the sweeter faith is lent
 Of fullest recompense beyond the Vail.

THE PARTING

The waters 'mid their lilies slept;
 Wood-odors wrapt me, sweet and wild;
Below, where trailing willows wept,
 A mirrored heaven smiled.

And as I watched the moveless tide,
 Two birds met in the midmost blue
A moment, touched, then circled wide
 And from each other flew—

Flew far away, nor met again,
 One winging east, one winging west;
And suddenly an ancient pain
 Pierced my remembering breast.

TO FRANCOIS

*Addressed to one who claimed to be the reincarnation
of Francois Villon*

Dear Francois, surely I recall
The nights of May, the days of June,
In that old century when all
The feathered songsters were in tune,
And roses blushed, as maids could not,
And men were brave to wield the blade.
Ah! Francois, I have half forgot
For many years you've been a shade.

Dear minstrel, I cannot forget
How at my lattice you would stand,
And while the vines with dew were wet,
The vibrant strings beneath your hand
Thrilled with the passion that they spoke;
What! is that vagrant passion true?
Are all those singing strings not broke?
And is it, Francois, so with you?

Ay, if it be that you can come
To visit me once more on earth,
And wake the lute for centuries dumb,
And fill Time's cobwebbed halls with mirth,
Then leave the brawlers and the wine,
The taverns and the wenches rude,
And under starlight still divine
Prove to me that you now are good.

Envoi

Poet, the hours will never stay;
And beauty wanes as roses fade;
I am a maiden of to-day—
Prove to me you are not a shade.

FRANCOIS ENTREATED

Ah, Francois, dear,
Shall I not hear
Your voice again
In love's sweet strain?
And shall your lute
At last lie mute,
Its chords unstrung,
Its songs unsung?

Can you forget,
When dews were wet
Upon the leaf,
The ancient grief,
The wild unrest
That filled your breast,
Because at last
All love seemed past?

Why should you grieve?
Ah, dear, believe
That o'er despair,
O'er pain and care,
O'er gulfs of time,
In some fair clime,
'Mid softer skies
Our star shall rise.

Resume your lay;
Once more the day
Shall put to flight
The fears of night;
Nor ever dream—
Whate'er may seem—
Your notes shall fall
Unheeded all.

TO THE BARD OF VAGABONDIA

When from the new-mown fields is borne
A fragrance through the summer dusk,
And from the censers of the morn
The roses spill their heavy musk—
Then, Francois, lift your voice once more
And touch the ribboned lute to song.
And at my casement, as before,
Your tender lays of love prolong.

Come when the night lies on the land,
Or when the dawn is in the skies;
Leave at the inn the brawling band,
The bacchic crew with blood-shot eyes,
The frowsy beards, the tangled hair,
And to my door, dear vagrant, rove,
And in the cool, pellucid air
Sing, as of old, your deathless love.

THE SOLE REMEMBRANCE

I know, Love, I shall nevermore
Walk with you down familiar ways,
Nor see the human guise you wore
Beside me in the old, sweet days.

And when fond Memory strives to paint
Upon the shadows your dear face,
She trips and falters and grows faint,
Seeking each lineament to re-trace.

Yet—strange Time mocks us thus, the Churl!—
Of all your witchery, I recall
Only the wayward golden curl
That o'er your forehead used to fall.

IN A NORTHERN WOODLAND

The fragile twin-flower hides
 In the cool of the braided grass,
And its faint sweet perfume rides
 On the zephyrs as they pass;
The fairies chime its slender bells
 At morn and noon and eve,
Where fireflies in the twilight dells,
 Their magic dances weave.

To the pale Indian pipe
 A fluttering night-moth clings,
And when the witching hour is ripe
 About their mystic rings
Featly the fairies foot,
 While the twin-flower bells chime on,
And swiftly from his hollow root
 A gnome peeps and is gone.

WELTSCHMERZ

What is it the green leaves whisper
When the year is young and bright,
And the leaves that are sere and crisper
In the wan October night?
The river grieves to the willow,
The mountain weeps to the plain,
The mint sighs low to the mallow,
And the wind wails over the main.

The yellow sunshine lieth
On the face of the waning year,
Like a pallid smile that dieth
On the tremulous lips of fear;
There's a sorrow too deep for dissembling,
There's an anguish too keen to betray,
There's a terror too fearful for trembling,
There's a pallor more pale than the day.

There's a secret, a heartache, a trouble,
A mystery of misery, a sign
That floats upon time, as a bubble
Swims on the cool surface of wine;
The heart of the great world is throbbing
With an old inarticulate pain,
And the sound of the sea is its sobbing,
And its tears are the falling rain.

THE SUICIDE

Too weary to lift my head;
Too weary almost to die;
And when at length I am dead,
What matters it where I lie?

Short shrift—and a nameless grave;
A breath—and a sudden leap;
Then the closing of the wave—
And sleep, ah, sleep!

DISILLUSIONMENT

The veil of the future baffled me
 When I would fain see through,
Though 'twas only a web of fairy wings
 Woven of light and dew.

A soft breeze rimples the curtain—
 A shimmering mist of blue;
Oh, why was there torn a tiny rift?
 Oh, why did I see through?

IN THE GARDEN

By the firefly's dancing light,
 With the Indian paint-brush, dipt
In the lucent dews of night
 And the gold of the cowslips, tipt
With the star-shine, cold and faint,
 In the garden's perfumed close,
Through the still hours the fairies paint
 The velvet leaves of the rose.

There are whispers in the dark,
 Dim echoes of past hours,
When, ere the firefly's spark
 Was lighted amid the flowers,
A fragrance of joy and youth,
 Begotten of love and desire,
Kindled a glory here, forsooth,
 That never shall expire.

FAILURE

I stood upon the gray cliff's splintered crest,
And saw an ousel beat with weary wing
Above the rearing eagle's foaming breast;
Its crying stabbed the sky and seemed to cling
To the low clouds that swept across the morn;
And as I watched, the bird dropped slowly down,
A moment fluttered, broken and forlorn,
Then sank, and failure mocked and marked it
drown.

WHEN YOU CAME

Beneath cathedral elms I wandered lone;
My heart was numb; for me the summer sun
No longer with its old-time splendor shone;
The tale was told; at last, my life was done.

An oriole, amid the boughs o'erhead.
Fluted its love-notes, but I heard them not;
My eyes were darkened and my soul seemed dead;
A cloud lay on the landscape like a blot.

And then you came, and all my pulses stirred
To sudden music; o'er the earth there crept
A flush of bloom; you smiled, but spoke no word,
Yet in my soul the light of Hope upleapt.

THE BIRTH OF THE FIREFLY

Reprinted from "The Harvest Home"

A dewdrop trembled on an aspen leaf;
Above, a nightingale
Sent through the dark his first low note of grief,
Above the shadowy vale;

And as that note throbbed on the sentient air,
Wrung from a heart forlorn,
The dewdrop slipped into the dusk, and there
A firefly was born.

FOREKNOWN

*Lieut. E. B. F., killed in action, France, Sept. 14, 1918.
Reprinted from "The Harvest Home"*

I dreamed and I awoke, the morning light
Streamed o'er my bed—it was no longer night.

He died in France, and I was with him, though
We were three thousand miles apart; for lo!
He called me to him and I saw him die
A hero's death; beside him there I knelt,
My arm beneath his head. He knew I felt
Repaid while sharing his great sacrifice,
In that wild night beneath the alien skies.

I did not need to hear the fatal word
That came at length; already, when I heard
The woful message, it was known full well
That yonder in the awful din, he fell,
Laying upon the altar of his God
The blood wherewith he dewed the shell-torn sod:
And though I miss him, yet my heart the while
Like his is tranquil, for I saw him smile.

SHADOWS

Over the darkened woodlands a shadow slowly creeps;
The moving mists are dimly shredding a raveled skein;
While under the trailing branches the umbered water
sweeps.
And after the mountain glooms, seen through a veil
of rain.

Never a life goes by but has its shadowy days,
Some bitter hours of pain, some weird it must dree;
For human feet ne'er yet walked in endless sunny ways;
And every heart comes sometime to its lone
Gethsemane.

NAUGHTY LUCILE

Reprinted from "The Harvest Home"

O naughty Lucile, she cam' down from Quebec,
Wis ze cheek lak ze rose an' all white on ze neck,
An' she work ver' mooch as a couturiere
In ze shop—what you call 'em—ze dressmaker, hey?

Now she save enough monnee to buy ze fine gown,
Zen she go to ze Astor fer tea;
She walk up an' down, all ze men turn aroun',
An' zay gasp—at what zay can see.

Oui, naughty Lucile, she mak' all ze men feel
Zat zay 're mebbe in love wis her;
Her lips are lak cherries, her tees are lak pearls,
Her eyes—sacré Dame!—zay're not lak ozzer girls'.

O naughty Lucile, she mak' all ze men feel
Zat zay 'r crazee in love wis her;
She say zat she's dyin' fer love an' fer kisses;
Ze men say, "I'll save her if zat's what she misses."

O naughty Lucile, she mak' all ze men feel
Zat zay wish to mak' marry on her;
Une tres jolie fille, wis ze leetle black curl;
Ah, bon Dieu! but I say she's ze bes' lokin' girl!

THE LIGHT ON THE HILLSIDE

Reprinted from "The Harvest Home"

At night, far up the hillside, faintly shines
A tiny light that trembles like a star;
What lies behind its small, uncertain beam
The dweller in the valley cannot guess;
And yet, perchance, a soul that harbors there
May in some fateful moment touch his own.

Within a humble cottage, by the stream
That threads the lonely vale, a crippled child
Has watched as, eve by eve, the dark draws down
With dusk and dews, the kindling of that light,
And in his simple heart has pictured there
A happy home wherein love reigns supreme.

The Child Speaks

Ah, yonder is that twinkling light again!
My heart is glad to see its little ray
Piercing the dark with tidings of good cheer.
I think that in yon home are sturdy boys,
Not weak like me, but who can run about
And play. Some day when I am big and strong
I'll climb the hill and tell them how they helped
Me in my heart to bear the cruel pain.
Each night before I sleep I pray that God
Will guide and guard them through the coming years,
Making them glad as they have gladdened me,
Though they have never known the ailing boy
Shut in his room, beyond the wide green fields.

Behind the Light—A Wife Speaks

Behind the guttering candle there is one
Who speaks in bitterness: "At last you're dead—
Well, you will never know the poisoned shaft
You winged into my breast, nor yet the wreck
Of all my maiden hopes and girlish dreams.
I loved you! Hither came I as a bride,
And now you die, unwept and all unloved.
When you fell sick, through the long midnight hours
I watched beside your pillow, hopeless, crushed,
Despoiled of woman's birthright. For I knew
You lacked the wished-for strength to clutch my throat
In grip of steel, sparing my wretched life
That you might only torture me again.
All this I knew, yet never left your bed
Of mortal suffering. What held me there
Until this hour I know not, lest, perchance,
It was some subtle influence that breathed,
"Be strong, love endeth not in nothingness."
Now I go forth into the voiceless dark,
Tearless, alone, yet there is something left
That cannot wholly perish in the night."
Thus who shall say the soul which lies behind
The distant light shall not sometime, somehow
Meet ours and save us with its healing touch.

THE NEW DAY.

My soul sailed out on the river of night,
In a moonbeam shallop it took its flight,
Out toward the dark and threatening main
It sailed and sailed—then came back again:

Came back again in a glory of stars,
Shattering the long night's iron bars,
Came with the sign of a new fresh morn
Where in my spirit should be reborn.

Ah, yes, I dwelt in the blackest night
Till my soul sailed out on that moonbeam bright,
And thou saidst, "I will love thee, my own, till death,"
And the day stole up with the morn's sweet breath.

THE HAVEN OF THE HEART

Reprinted from "The Harvest Home"

Where the wild wastes of waters toss and seethe,
And maddened whitecaps dash against the cliffs,
And the fierce waves round rocky headlands wreathe
Their foamy flowers and wreckage heaves and drifts—
She stands at gaze above the angry tide,
Beholding from her crag the laboring bark,
And prays her own may safely reach her side,
As the ship staggers shoreward through the dark.

On life's wide threshold, with meek, gentle eyes,
A maiden stands and looks with half affright
Upon the world's mad ways, the threatening skies,
And the long shadows that forecast the night;
And wonders in her tender heart if he,
Her own true love, will safely win her side,
Bringing to her the treasure that shall be
The crown and glory of his waiting bride

REFUSAL

Lord Christ, if all the shells were pearls,
And all the sands were gold,
And the sunk galleons of the sea
Should yield their wealth untold;

Yet these to Thee were less than naught,
Than atoms of the dust,
Couldst Thou from our reluctant hearts
Claim but the smallest trust.

The grass its incense lifts to Thee
For casual rains and dews,
But we, the almsmen of Thy love,
Our gratitude refuse.

IN AN AIRPLANE

Reprinted from "The Harvest Home"

Gently the ground sank from me ere I knew;
My heart leaped up as breaking earth's last bond;
The trees in huge bouquets a moment swayed
Like rushes round a pond.
Busy within their pigmy colonies,
Below I saw the toiling human ants—
Then they were gone. Ah! now I know whence come
Our dreams; they dwell where sunrays wink and glance
Among the rose-hued clouds which break away
In fragments, as soft breezes earthward play;
And sailing by, I saw dim forms that knelt
Before an altar like pale nuns in gray.
I was a bird—on pinions wide I swept
Upward, forever upward still I kept;
I felt no earthly fetters binding me,
For I, at last, was free.

UNE PENSÉE

If all the world were but a barren waste,
And in it naught but God and I and you—
If in your hands my love a sceptre placed,
And proudly I became your vassal true—

I think some poignant pain of happiness,
Some dear despair, through all my veins might flow,
Because, howe'er I panted to confess,
No heart save mine could all your goodness know.

THE SECRET

Each flower leans its tiny ear
 Towards the dumb earth at its feet,
As though it waited still to hear
 Some secret, wild and sweet,

Of lovers, long since turned to dust,
 Who once strolled down this grassy lane,
Breathing undying love and trust,
 Nor passed this way again.

IN OTHER DAYS

They nod and pass; in other days
 It was not so,
But now they go their separate ways
 As strangers go.

Once glory ran before their feet
 Along the grass,
And rainbows round them seemed to meet
 O'er seas of glass;

And morning sang mid fire and dew,
 While toward the skies
Spiraled in the unmeasured blue
 The butterflies. -

But earth no more with joy is drenched;
 And now, alas!
The songs are hushed; the fire is quenched;—
 They nod and pass.

REFLECTIONS

As a wild flower, by a stream,
 Leaning to view its own fair face,
Sees in the watery mirror's gleam
 The sad, inevitable trace
Of Time's rude touch, the while she sheds
 Her petals all, and fades and dies,—
So the vain woman sees and dreads
 The delicate tracery round her eyes,
 Knowing, by this first sign of age,
 Time's finger moves to turn the page.

THE CONSTANT PRESENCE

Ah, sweet it is, when morn is come,
To know that I shall meet your eyes,
And sweet, when birds at dark are dumb,
To hear your voice as stars arise.

For you are never absent, dear;
I see your face in trees, in grass,
In shadows when the dawn is near,
In sunlit clouds that o'er me pass.

And when the night lies on the land
And all the world is lost in sleep,
I feel the light touch of your hand,
And know you still love's vigil keep.

RENEWAL

Time keeps its old accustomed round;
The year renews itself once more;
In yearning sky and quickening ground
Life throbs and burgeons as before.

The bluebird swells his throat with song;
And small wing'd creatures without name
Stir and mount upward, as along
The pastures cowslips run like flame.

The challenge of proud chanticleer,
The mellow lowing of the kine,
Make jocund music far and near,
While singing runlets glance and shine.

The keen, damp scent of fresh-turned mold,
The buds with vernal showers wet,
Still waken memories, as of old,
All poignant with a wild regret.

RETRIEVAL

The old grey house on the hill waited,
Waited for her return;
It yawned lazily and seemed to stretch in the noonday
sun,
But its heart cried out for its belovéd.

The violets by the door peeped out each Spring,
Trembling with expectancy;
The lilacs beckoned with their perfumed arms
Till they grew tired and sadness withered them.

One day a white butterfly floated up the path,
Caressed a lilac as he passed,
Murmuring with a weary little sigh:
"Now she can never come, but she sent me;
I—I am her soul!"

LOVE AND DOUBT

Like sands that trickle from the grasp;
Like water that no hands can hold;
Like winds that no embrace can clasp;
Like mists no human arms can hold—
E'en so is love not built on trust;
A love distraught by doubts and fears,
Is like a handful of white dust
Tossed in the whirlwind of the years.

BECAUSE I LOVE THEE

Because I love thee, all the world is fair;
Tender the starlight on the shadowy hill;
The drowsy flowers their dewy fragrance spill
From censers lightly shaken on the air,
And down the slopes of the long uplands, where
The pastured kine with their soft breathings fill
The listening night, a thin grass-netted rill
With sweet complaints shakes loose its tangled hair.

But, O my love, because thou art the light
That bathes all loveliness, and sows the morn
With flakes of golden fire, and girdles night
With astral gems, the earth for me hath worn
A robe of splendor, and the world is dight
With fadeless grace, of thine own beauty born.

GHOSTS

It may be, ay, it may be, who can tell?—

That down these moss-grown crumbling bricks their
feet

Still lightly fall, and round them, wild and sweet,
The perfume of the lilacs weaves its spell,
While the far ululations of a bell

Haunt the cool dusk with murmurs soft and sweet;

Ay, here upon this gray old garden seat

They listen to the thrush's ritournel,

And while they watch the evening shadows fall,

They whisper the beloved names they knew,

Catch distant sounds borne through the interval

'Twixt day and night—each dear, familiar clue

Leading them back, as fond, faint voices call,

And love breathes round them with the silvery dew.

LONGING

Oh, but to see your vanished face again;
Feel, as of yore, the old-time poignant thrill
That once I knew when all your love was mine;
But more than the fond whispers of your heart,
And more than the soft pressure of your hand,
I miss the understanding in your eyes.

AS ONE TO ANOTHER

Once I sat on a cliff and said to a garrulous crow
On the branch of a dead pine near:
"A thousand hands are knocking at my heart,
To comprehend the secret of all Life."
Casting upon me his cool, calculating glance,
Impatiently he cawed me his reply:
"It would be lost in the finding,
And is found in the seeking,
And that is why from wherever I am
I fly away—
I never reach my goal,
Do you?"

GROTESQUERIE

Why is it that, after I have been with you, I see things
so strangely?

A boat in a mist at sea seems like a cloud that has
grown tired of hanging in the sky

And is resting on a wave.

A flash of scarlet berries—as though my heart were
held to a mirror

And were ready to be plucked—

Plucked by your hand, which seems gnarled with
strength,

And yet clings to my mouth softly like nasturtium ten-
drils;

Is it that your mind is strange and affects me,

Or is it that I am startled by my own mind's reflection
in your eyes?

YOU

I thought I found your soul hanging on a snowball bush,
It was white and soft and flaky
And lay caressingly limp in my hand;
When I looked closely
I found it was brown and frayed at the edges,
And lo! while I puzzled,
It fell quite apart and left only a dry shell—
Then I knew I had found you out.

LILIES OF THE VALLEY

Lilies of the Valley are the tears of an angel
Which, when they fell one vernal day,
Caught and hung on a fairy tree.
Their perfume was stolen from a tiny wind
That carried in its arms a scent-bag,
Which was pierced by the bill
Of a venturesome hummingbird.

TWO THINGS

Yesterday was grey and heavy;
The strong chill air on the Drive
Seemed to twist me about with cruel fingers
Until my body ached.

I passed two things which thrill me most:
A squad of soldiers, in dust-colored uniform,
Marching with heads held high;
And brushing their arms,
Like a lily by the roadside,
Was a child in white confirmation robes;
I thought —
"Both are expressions of God."

IMAGINATION

I gazed afar into wet spaces
And saw a grey ship kneeling on the deep,
Beseeching heaven with its sparry hands —
When, lo! it melted to a cloud
Torn by the passion of its lover—wind;
Swiftly it became a bird,
Pale as the mists which swathed it round
.....Startled, I found it was only my vagrant thoughts
Which had escaped from me—their jailer.

LAMP SHADE

From the French of Paul G rally.

You ask me why I sit silent, saying nothing;
It is because that strange time is upon us,
The hour of eyes and of tender smiles—the evening!
And because tonight I love you—infinately.
Press me close, I have need of caresses.
Ah, if you knew all that rises in my heart tonight,
Of ambition, of pride, of desire, of tenderness and
even—of goodness!
But no, you could not know it

Lower the lamp shade a little, will you? We will be
closer;

It is only in the shadow that hearts talk.
And one sees the eyes better when one sees less of things
around him.

Tonight I love you too much to speak of love.
Press me against your breast;
I long for you to fondle me.
Lower the shade a little more.
There, now let us not speak. Be quiet,
And do not move.
Oh, it is so good to feel your warm hands on my face.
.. .. .

What is it now? What do they want?

Oh, it's the coffee.

Ah well! set it there,—

Now go quickly and close the door.....

.. .. .

What is it, that I have been saying to you?
Shall we take the coffee now? You prefer it?
That's true, you like it hot.

May I serve you? Wait, I'll do it.
Some sugar? One lump is enough? Shall I taste it?
There, here is your cup, love.
My! how dark it is! One cannot see at all—
Do turn up the lamp a little.

PERVERSENESS.

Two lovers wooed me: one with ready smile
Greeted me blithely, but my pulse stirred not;
The other met me with a frown the while,
And lo! my heart sang and I blessed my lot

WHY?

Why is it that the autumn sun grows chillier,
Seems to be more distant, and welcomes the keen winter
winds?

Is it because it has grown tired of trying to forget in
brilliant shining
And in despair pales in its remembering?

Why is it that the roseleaves fall gently to the earth?—
As if they suddenly recalled an ancient pain,
After trying in radiant blooming
To forget the bitter past.

Why is it that I am cold, forlorn and old,
And welcome the fleeting years with something akin
to ecstasy?
Ah, love, it is because I always must remember.

MY MESSAGE.

I will sing you a little song
Which the wind will blow away;
Will it blow it to you, I wonder?
I like to feel the wind
Tear the notes from my lips;
It is almost as if
You had kissed them away.

THE VALENTINE

May gentle spirits, bright, benign,
Keep ward o'er that dear life of thine;
Be this my wish—thy valentine.

SILHOUETTES

Beyond the sleeping waters gleam,
Pallid against the silent night,
Where the dark pinetrees brood and dream,
Two gravestones, cold and white.
Long since from Time's wild ways they fled;
The chill waves wrapped them, breast to breast;
And now, though storms may rave o'erhead,
These lovers lie at rest.

.

I dreamed I was in Paradise;
Beside a quiet stream
I walked beneath the golden skies
And saw thee in my dream.
I heard thy tender voice again,
Knew with thee all was well;
Then I awoke, and life's old pain
Leaped up like fires of hell.

.

The storms their cloudy vans have closed
That once about me whirled;
Like dead leaves swept away are all
My darkling doubts and fears;
And now at last hope beckons where
Wide vistas are unfurled,
O'erarched with light like rainbows seen
Through sudden mists of tears.

.

Disaster lies behind me, all
The wreck and shame and dole
Mid which my hapless feet have moved
These many weary years,

And now at last hope beckons where
The future like a scroll
Is spread before my wildered eyes
Grown dim with sudden tears.

.

He wooed me, but he was not bold;
He feared to give offence;
Yet Heaven's fair kingdom, as of old,
Still suffereth violence.
A maid's heart, like a city's gate,
Is carried by assault;
But they who love and hesitate
Are vanquished for their fault.

.

The lily spake to the rose:
"Hold up your head, if you are fair;
Why should you bow your beauty down,
As though you bore a load of care?"
The rose to the lily spake:
"I own that I am fair to see;
Yet to the grace men say is mine
I seek to add humility."

.

Ye children of these favored years,
The promise is your own,
Behold! Hope, rainbow-girt, appears,
Truth mounts her radiant throne;
Sing while the gracious moments pass,
Heirs of this blessed day,
God's sign is in the sunny grass,
June winds about you play.

ROWEN

BY

JAMES B. KENYON

INSCRIPTION.

*Thou whose fond eyes in sleep were never sealed,
When love's stern ways were spread before thy feet—
Thou who didst hope and pray, and watch and shield,
When death's dusk wings against my windows beat—
Take, O my mother, these poor broken sounds
Of singing; for while in their dizzy rounds
Of careless pleasure, men might heed not me
Nor my small pipe, yet praise e'er came from thee.*

THE WANDERING JEW

I.

Hier liegt mein Lieb: a heart's sad history—
A song of grief—a story of the brave—
A marvel of the past—a mystery—
A buried secret of an unknown grave.
O happy mortal who could live and die!
O happy mortal on whose brow, at birth,
Was writ in mystic character, "death!"
'Tis sweet to rest, and sweet it is to lie
Beneath the flowers and the cool green turf,
And sweet to lose this burden of the breath:
I cannot die, nor can I ever rest,
But ceaseless as the beating of the surf
Against the shore my heart beats in my breast,
And life for me hath naught but bitter ills.
O lovely are the sky and yon green hills,
And that dear, peaceful spot which men call "home;"
But lovelier is the melancholy grave
To me who cannot die, and lovelier all
Its rest to me who must forever roam.

II.

I've seen the stars in heaven come and go,
I've seen men's proudest structures rise and fall,
I've stood on desolate shores where the wild wave
Hath ceased to roll, and rivers stopped their flow,
And these have passed, and yet I cannot die.
The things I once loved are not; long ago
They dimly came as half-remembered dreams,
Or like some long-forgotten melody
Of that which was to be, is not, but seems
The haunting sorrow of another life.

O, fond the darling kisses of my wife,
And fond to me the memory of my child,
And fond the light of tender eyes that smiled
For me alone,— if yet indeed I be,
And am become not part of things I see.

III.

Here is a lovely thing—a tender flower,
All tinted like a summer-sunset sky,
With petals smoother than a maiden's cheek
And bluer than the blue of maiden's eye
Or violets beneath an April shower;
And yet it blooms, to slowly fade and die,
As yonder tawny lights, that lie
On evening's breast, grow faint and weak.
Fruit in autumnal sunshine melloweth,
And droppeth, and returneth back to dust:
All things speak of decay, decay and death;
I only cannot die, but ever must
Live on remembering, and hope and wait.
There yonder in the wood
The blithe bird carols to its patient mate
Upon the nest, or to the clamorous brood
Returneth home at eventide with food.
I only am alone; for me waits not
A gentle mate at gladsome eventide,
Nor joyful voice nor child's face at my side,
But dolorous and lonely is my lot.
O gracious God! to be always alone,
To be always apart from humankind
And the sweet fellowship of heart and mind;
Most solitary in the midst of men,
No voice responsive to the weary "When,"
Is cause to ever grieve and make unceasing moan!

IV.

Lo! the full-fraught year,
New-born from out the dark To-be,
Cometh ever, and never to me
Bringeth death's sweet cheer.
And spring and summer wane,
And ripe is the golden ear,
And the harvester gathers in his sheaves,
While down through the smoky light the yellow leaves
Flutter as if in pain.
And the river floweth by
With a mournful monody,
With an under-sound of woe;
And the brooklet seeks the river, and the river seeks
the sea,
And is lost in it as moments are lost in eternity;
For all things change forever as the ages come and go,
But I alone remain who cannot change or cease to be.
Down across the cycles of the centuries that were
Move the shadows of an era fraught with dole and
dread,
When, with anguish worn and bowed beneath the cross
he had to bear,
From my door I drove the Saviour, heaping curses on
his head.

V.

I have watched the ripple play
Far along a barren beach,
Till upon the dim blue reach
They have slowly died away;
And I've marked the weary day
Sink into the western sea,
And athwart the twilight gray
The red moon rising o'er the lea;

And my old sad heart within
Hath faintly pulsed, in harmony
With some far music, weak and thin,
Till I fondly hoped to die.
But the wan and tremulous fingers of the chill and
pallid dawn
Have groped up into the darkness with the flaring touch
of morn,
And the mists from off the mountain and the meadow,
lake and lawn,
Like my hopes of death, have vanished, and the day hath
dawned forlorn.

VI

Sweet the song the Hebrew maid
Sang beside the well,
And sweet the sound of cithers, played
When twilight shadows fell.
But oft I hear the mellow music
Of an ancient rhyme,
Chanted to a little stranger
From a golden clime:
Then I see the mild-eyed mother
Smile through happy tears,
Until the vision and the voice
Are lost across the years.

VII.

The friends I loved in turn have passed away,
Nor mossy mounds mark where their ashes lie,
But on their graves the careless children play,
And pluck the flowers beneath a sunny sky,
Nor hear the sound of nature's threnody:
For there the harvest bee makes dirge at noon,

And unseen voices mourn at dewey eve,
And underneath the light of summer moon
The early nightingale begins to grieve.
And then the touch of loving lips,
And pressure of a clinging hand,
Come back through memory's soft eclipse,
From out the Silent-land.

VIII.

What is it trembles everywhere,
That sobs and sinks, as sounds of shells
When the great ocean heaves and swells
And booms in caverns of the air?
Then fine the melody as thrills
Along the branch, when bursting buds
Drink in the rich warm light that floods
The plains, the valleys and the hills.
O faint and far, yet strangely sweet,
Nor wholly sweet, nor wholly sad,
But mixed, like laughter of the glad
With mourners' wailing in the street.
I hear the sound of other bells
That tinkle on the robes of priests—
Of bells that peal at bridal feasts,
And those that toll death's solemn knells.
All, all is changed; and yet I go
Unchanged adown the shifting years,
But catch, at last, through doubtful tears,
A vision of my sleep below.

IX.

Beyond the hills, against the sky,
Roll up the clouds with welcome rain,
And o'er the forests, dark and high,
They come across the thirsty plain.

The trees and shrubs lift up their heads;
A fluttering breeze is breathing low;
Each flower its petals wide outspreads;
The cattle seek the milking sheds,
And fowls, wing-drooped, to shelter run
Till, arched athwart the sky, God's bow
Announces that the storm is done.
And then the fields are fringed with light.
And all the wood begins to glow,
And through the meadows swiftness flow
The glancing runlets, clear and bright.
And bursts from out a thousand throats
A flood of song in bush and brake
And o'er the waters of the lake,
With mellow cadence, falls and floats.
The meanest thing on earth is glad—
The meanest thing instinct with life,
Save me who, with my doom at strife,
Of all create, alone am sad.

X.

O sad yon valley is to me,
And sad yon mountains crowned with snow,
And sad the river's ceaseless flow
Towards the ceaseless sea.
And sad the huntsman's distant horn
Across the hills and far away,
And weary is the break of morn,
And weary night and weary day.
There are sweet voices call from out the past;
There are sweet voices call from out the tomb;
A voice from out the future cries, "At last,"
And, beckoning me from out the sullen gloom,
My own dark shape before me ever flits,
Pale, cold and sternly calm, as when one sits
Beneath the shadow of an awful doom.

TOWARDS THE SUNSET

I

'Tis high noon still—how swiftly will it pass,
And backward-creeping shadows slowly fall
O'er the long slope, while crickets pipe and call
From lonely twilight coverts of the grass;—
High noon o'er steep and valley, but alas!
Time ne'er will furl for one brief interval
His tireless pinions, nor yet stay the small
Still sands, like years, down slipping in his glass.
Hasten thy footsteps, dear; love's darkling bower
Shall with thy coming into music break;
At evening thy bright presence shall have power
To sow the vesper dusk with many a flake
Of pulsing fire. Oh, from each veiled hour
Let us with tremulous joy its largess take.

II.

Beyond the opal-hearted west the day
Still smiles upon the world; each soaring steep
Is clothed with splendor, and cloud-vistas keep
Pale lilac-tinted headlands dashed with spray
From pearly seas that round them roll away;
Yet even now, beyond the fulgent deep,
The cohorts of the dark begin to creep
From umbered lairs like hungry beasts of prey.
O priestess of the heart, is the flame cold
At which a worn and homesick votary
Would fain find some late cheer?—and now, behold!
I wait to hear thy summons unto me,
Bidding me enter in, ere I am old,
To know at last love's sacred ministry.

ANTIPHONAL

He O fond and true, O perfect love,
In whom my pulses ebb and flow,
About thy path the kind stars move;
Peace round thee breathes where thou dost go.

She And thou, dear heart, shalt be to me
As sun to flower; through thy wide arc
My grateful soul shall follow thee
From dewy morn to perfumed dark.

Both O rapturous days! O ecstasy
Of love's delight what tongue may tell?
Time stays its flight for thee and me,
Time stays its flight, and all is well.

THE LEAVETAKING

Life, wilt thou leave me now; o'er all the way,
Or rough or smooth, together we have fared;
The selfsame scanty cruse we still have shared,
And, whether Fortune smiled or frowned, were gay.
Duty's stern voice hath called; we did not stay
To doubt, but greatly loved and greatly dared;
Tempests have beaten on us; we have bared
Our lifted brows unshadowed by dismay.

Dear comrade of a thousand hardships past,
Of tender chidings, confidences sweet,
Is this the end, and must we part at last?
Go we our separate ways no more to meet?
The silence waits us; round us falls the vast
Waste night, but still we follow Hope's light feet.

MYSTERY

Upon the verge of night I walked;
 Behind me sank the day;
An unseen Presence by me stalked
 Along the darkling way.

The calm and awful stars looked down;
 Where icy peaks did rise,
The boreal aurora's crown
 Paled in the solemn skies.

Then past the touch of love's warm hand,
 Beyond thought's utmost mete,
I heard against life's crumbling strand
 Death's sullen billows beat.

O universe of mystery!
 In time's vast prison-place,
Is there not One who holds the key?
 Shall we not see his face?

HAGAR

Wide wastes of sand beneath a brazen sky;
Far hills that shimmer in the breathless air;
And clumps of stunted shrubs that, here and there,
With pale and parchèd leafage, vex the eye.
Her bread is spent, her water-skin is dry;
The child's faint sobbings pierce her with despair;
Her face is hid, her fallen head is bare;
"Now, O my God," she crieth, "let me die."

Hark! from the midmost heavens a deep sound:
"What aileth thee? Rise, Hagar, fear thee not,
For God hath heard the child's voice from the ground,
And He will succor thee in thy sore lot."
Then she arose, and took the lad, and found
A crystal fountain in that desert spot.

FINEM RESPICE

O nature, take me to thy heart once more,
Nor let the mornings be less bright that I
Beneath the murmuring leaves and flowers lie,
Nor let the happy birds that sing and soar
Repeat one joyful note the less, that o'er
My resting-place the summer grass is high;
I would not that to any human eye
The world should be less lovely than of yore.

For life to me is full of pleasantness.
And all the ways of earth are fresh and sweet;
The night hath breathed upon me but to bless,
And morn with dew hath laved my eager feet;
So when the cool turf on my brow shall press,
Still let the prosperous seasons o'er me meet.

DAY BY DAY

Each day brings with it its own care,
Some burden of desire or dread,
Some thorny crown of pain to wear,
Some new, strange path to tread.

E'en while we sleep Time's secret loom
Its busy, noiseless shuttle plies,
To round us weave, through hours of gloom,
Our various destinies.

Yet each dark thread is mixed with light—
Assured deliverance with distress,
Weeping with laughter, wrong with right,
And rest with weariness.

For morn's diurnal bounty brings
Its punctual good naught can destroy—
Some flower that blooms, some bird that sings
Some sweet, fresh gift of joy.

BECALMED

The purple skyline round the dead waste sea
 Shimmers athwart the palpitating heat;
 Along the blistered deck no scurrying feet
Are heard, nor any cheery songs to free
The seaman's treadmill task from drudgery;
 Against the masts the sails have ceased to beat
 Their light tattoo, while windless vapors cheat
The haggard eyes that watch perpetually.

O soul becalmed, pray God some breeze may fill
 Thine idle canvas, and the wakened deep
Rise and dispute thy perilous way, until
 Thy foam-wreathed prow shall o'er the billows leap,
And with the joy of conquest all a-thrill,
 To port at last with pennons proudly sweep.

OCTOBER

October lights her watchfires on the hill,
For the days hasten, and the year declines;
The dusty grapes droop on the yellowing vines,
Plumped with the sweets these last warm hours distill.
The stream that loiters downward to the mill
Wimples amid its reeds and faintly shines.
At intervals, from out the darkling pines,
The squirrel repeats his challenge, loud and shrill.

In vain the sunlight weaves its golden snood
About the Earth; an unseen pillager,
Night after night, with fingers chill and rude,
Despoiling her rich beauty plucks at her;
While morn by morn, o'er garden, field and wood,
The hoar-frost scatters its light minever.

THE SUMAC

It holds its torch aloft
 Undimmed in the light of day,
And whether the airs be soft,
 Or the storms about it play,
It abates no jot of its beams,
 But still burns on and on,
Keeping its own sweet dreams,
 Till life sinks low and is gone.

WHEN THE DAY DECLINES

When the day declines,
And the night is near—
When the low sun shines
On the landscape sere—
Then, while shadows creep
Over vale and height,
Lo! beyond the deep
A single star grows bright.

When my life declines,
And the night is near—
When the low sun shines
On a way of fear—
Then, while shadows creep
O'er my glimmering sight,
Lo! beyond the deep
May a star grow bright.

EDMUND SPENSER

How have the years flown since that golden day
When, where the Mulla rolls her dimpling flood,
Thou heard'st the birds sing in the Irish wood,
And Raleigh with thee on the upland lay!
Again through gloomy forests old and gray,
O'er many a waste and trackless solitude,
Whitherso'er thy Muse's knightly mood
May lead us in thy tale, we seem to stray.

O master, it was not on oaten reeds
Thou madest music for the world's delight,
Nor yet on Pan's shrill pipe didst thou e'er flute;
To sing of courtly grace and lordly deeds,
Of lovely Una and the Redcross Knight,
Behold! thou hadst Apollo's silver lute.

THE MOHAWK

Thou windest down between the hills,
 Past many a gleaming lawn and lea,
The tribute of a thousand rills
 To bear toward the distant sea.

'Twixt level fields of wheat and corn,
 By many a cool and quiet wood,
Past founts where singing streams are born,
 Thou rollest down thy silver flood.

Within thy wave the shadows play;
 Along thy banks the blossoms bloom;
And to and fro, through all the day,
 The swallows sweep from sun to gloom.

Unchanged thy voice; still sweet and low
 Thou murmurest to the leaves and grass,
And happy winds that o'er thee blow
 And lightly kiss thee as they pass.

The lordly Hudson waits for thee;
 With throbbing heart and smiling face,
He greets his bride right royally,
 And folds her in his wide embrace

And thus espoused, ye sweetly flow
 Down to the boundless azure sea,
As loving souls together go
 Into God's vast eternity.

RIZPAH

Blown through the gusty spaces of the night,
The pale clouds fleet like ghosts along the sky;
A fitful wind goes moaning feebly by,
And the faint moon, poised o'er the craggy height,
Dies in its own uncertain, misty light.

Within the hills the water-springs are dry;
The herbs are withered; and the sand-wastes lie
Dim, wide, and lonely to the weary sight.

Behold! her awful vigil she will keep
Through the wan night as through the burning day;
Though all the world should sleep, she will not sleep,
But watch, wild-eyed and fierce, to scare away,
As round and round, with hoarse, low cries they creep,
From dead sons the hungry beasts of prey.

PAIN

I met a loathsome beggar on the way,
Who sued for alms. His unkempt, grizzled hair
Fell o'er his forehead like a thatch, his eyes,
Small, red, and all aflood with rheum, were bent
With leering supplication on my own.
Betwixt his wasted palms he held a hat,
Battered and stained, wherein a few poor coins
Bespoke the pity wherewith passers-by
Had tossed him their scant dole. About his feet
Were wisps of straw, and as he bowed he prayed,
"An alms, kind stranger, for God's love, an alms."
I paused and, sick at heart, regarded all
The tattered wanderer's lorn and fallen state,
And wondered why so foul a blot should rest
Upon the beauteous day to mar its joy.
For the birds sang, and flowers were abloom,
And the white clouds were floating high, and round
The happy fields, swung by invisible hands,
A thousand censers yielded rare perfumes.
Then o'er my soul, like a great billow, rolled
Divine compassion, and against the grim
Black night of that vile beggar's woe I saw
The prosperous noon-tide of my own full life:
Till sudden shame seized on me, and a pang
Ne'er felt before pierced through me like a lance,
And the bright light was dashed from heaven, and o'er
The smiling earth a darkness fell. Whereat
When I was fain to hide me, that I dared
To quaff the cup of bliss while other lips
Famished for but one drop, lo! as I looked,
The wretch before me was transformed, his brow
Shone with celestial splendor, his deep eyes
Beamed with unearthly beauty, and his form

Was clad in raiment like the sun. I said,
"Who art thou?" and he answered, "I am Pain,
And come to teach all selfish lives that love
Opens the viewless gateway unto peace."
Then lifting from the dust my dazzled sight,
I stood alone, and in that moment gazed
On a new heaven clasping a new earth.

MIGHTY AT THE LAST

A little cloud upon the stainless sky,
A fringe of mist upon the mountain pale—
Lo! bye and bye the tempest roars on high,
And maddened torrents drown the peaceful vale.

A little blot upon life's virgin white,
A tiny serpent in the heart's warm nest—
Lo! bye and bye down rolls shame's fearful night,
And venomed fangs tear at the fatuous breast.

AN HOUR-GLASS.

The tawny sands slip downward in the glass
 Noiseless and smooth, a pulse whose even flow
 No boisterous winds can vex howe'er they blow,
A tide across whose breast no shadows pass.
Lo! yellow bees that drone in summer grass,
 A mill whose mossy wheel has ceased to go,
 A hawk above a woodland sailing slow,
A sunny field reaped by a brown-armed lass—

All these like visions rise upon my soul,
 Till, wholly meshed in Fancy's sorceries,
While still the grains sift from the crystal bowl,
 I feel against my brow a phantom breeze,
And see o'er gleaming sands the long waves roll,
 And hear the washings of the Orient seas.

A CRUSHED ROSE

When beauty, with her magic wand,
Touched thy young petals through and through,
A lovelier robe by thee was donned
Than e'er the bright Belphebe knew.
The bee sipped at thy ruby mouth,
And swift, sweet blushes did o'erplay
Thy perfect features when the south
Wind kissed thy nightly tears away.
But low thou liest now in dust,
To happier roses but a scorn,
The puppet of each passing gust,
Made fellow of by baser born.
O sweet decay! O fitting type
Of virtue from its place down hurled—
Of grace discrowned by a too-ripe,
Voluptuous day in this mad world!
Thou wast the plaything of an hour;
Awhile thou wast some lover's pride;
Then lightly, for another flower,
Thy heart was crushed and thrown aside.

IT SHALL BE KNOWN

Over and over I con it, and over and over again,
But somehow I cannot learn it—the meaning is not
plain.

Yet surely, I some time shall know how, out of the
darkened past,

And out of the shrouded future, light shall be gathered
at last.

Is it better indeed to have loved, though it be to have
loved and lost?

Answer, ye who have been caught, and harried and
wildly tossed

In the palms of a fickle chance, till the years are well-
nigh done,

And the grief and passion are spent, and the half of
life is gone.

O riddle too hard to read! O arid and wasted years!
O thoughts that deepen and deepen beyond the touch
of tears!

For the watching, remembering and waiting, for the
hungering of the heart,

For the soul's ineffectual crying, and for the bitter smart
Of pain returning daily, shall there not come, some-
where,

A recompense, a guerdon, an answer to the prayer
Of faith that strives and wrestles? Ah yes! the les-
son old

Shall be learned at last—the riddle shall be forever told.

TOO LATE

I saw his hand all marble white
 Across his pulseless breast,
The hand that once so busy was,
 Forevermore at rest.

I saw his brow, as cold as snow,
 Above the lifeless brain,
Smoothed of the lines that care had worn,
 And young and fair again.

Strange—strange—and from me far removed;
 Familiar, yet so strange,
Each lineament that I had known
 Touched by some awful change.

Ah, could we sweep away the mask,
 And thaw death's icy chill,
And bring the old days back again,
 Would we be careless still?

WHERE DREAMS COME TRUE

There is a land where light winds blow
From sun-crowned hills of long ago—
A land of morning fresh and sweet,
Where youth returns on flying feet;
Where memory smiles through happy tears,
And age forgets its weight of years;
Where withered roses bloom once more,
And faded eyes beam as of yore.
Ah! would that we might find the clue,
And win the realm where dreams come true;
Ay, find the joy we never knew,
Where dreams come true, where dreams come true.

There still love's whispered tale is told;
Hope spreads o'er earth her cloth-of-gold;
Fond, tremulous vows again are heard,
The answering, shy, half-spoken word;
While to the tender, brooding skies
Forget-me-nots lift dewy eyes,
And round the glad world, all day long,
Delight thrills on the wings of song.
O loved one, may I dwell with you
In that dear realm where dreams come true;
Ay, find the joy we never knew
Where happy dreams at last come true.

COME SLOWLY, PARADISE

Reprinted from "The Harvest Home"

O dawn upon me slowly, Paradise!
Come not too suddenly,
Lest my just-opened, unaccustomed eyes
Smitten with blindness be.

To those who from Time's penury and woe
Rise to thy heights afar,
Down which the floods of glory fall and flow,
Too great thy splendors are.

So grow upon me slowly; sweetly break
Across death's silent deep,
Till to thy morning brightness I shall wake
As one from happy sleep.

MOTHER

O she was fair to look upon;
Her level brows angelic shone,
And from the depths of her sweet eyes
Glimmered the lore of Paradise.

A household saint, with her no thought
Of whether more or less she wrought,
Content in love's untiring ways
To fill with needful tasks her days.

Nor did she ask for sign or speech
Of all her busy life might teach,
Happy that love, for love's own sake,
Its alabaster box might break.

And when the peaceful evening sun
Announced the day at length was done,
With folded hands above her breast,
She meekly turned to sleep and rest.

AT THE GRAVE OF BARBARA HECK:

Below the whispering pines she lies,
Safe from the busy world's loud roar;
Above her bend the North's pale skies,
The broad St. Lawrence sweeps before.

A humble woman, pure of heart,
She knew no dream of world-wide fame;
Yet in men's love she hath her part,
And thousands bless her homely name.

She sleeps the changeful years away;
Her couch its holy quiet keeps,
And many a pilgrim, day by day,
Turns thither from the world and weeps.

O plenteous tears of grateful love,
Keep green and fresh her lowly bed!
O minstrel birds that brood above,
Sing sweetly o'er the peaceful dead!

Amid the silent sleepers round
She sleeps, nor heeds time's wintry gust;
Tread softly, this is hallowed ground,
And mouldering here lies sacred dust.

Roll on, O world, your noisy way!
Go by, O years, with wrong and wreck!
But till the dawn of God's great day,
Shall live the name of Barbara Heck.

DIANA'S BATHING-PLACE

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Crossing the fields from market-town,
I spied Diana's bathing-place,
Where shy nymphs doffed a rustic gown
To seek the water's cool embrace;
I saw their bosoms' drifted snow,
Each with its virgin rosebud crowned
While silvery laughter, sweet and low,
Scarce stirred the silence round.

Crossing the fields from market-town,
Unknowing what rare hap was mine,
Through shimmering tresses, flowing down,
I saw white shoulders glance and shine;
The wave in little ripples broke
Round slender ankle and white arm,
While mid hushed leaves soft breezes woke,
To kiss each dazzling charm.

Crossing the fields from market-town
Where the green copse a bower made,
Mid chequered light and shadows brown,
They stood and dried them unafraid;
I saw the smooth wet limbs that gleamed
In the still pool, as in a glass,
While some reclined, with eyes that dreamed,
Couched on the velvet grass.

Fair Phyllis drew her garters on
And tied them in a dainty bow;
Her bodice Chloe ran to don,
With rosy cheeks and lips aglow;
Then, fearing should I longer wait,
Some dire mischance would cloud the day,
And mindful of Actæon's fate,
I swiftly stole away.

WHAT IS SHE LIKE?

What is she like?—soft winds at evening blown
O'er dew-wet fields—like tender lights that lie
At shut of day along the violet sky—
Like April buds, when blustering March has flown,
Peeping from out their sheathes—like red leaves strown
Down woodland paths when Autumn, trailing by,
With pensive brows down bent and veiled eye,
Wanders amid her rustling stooks alone.

For all things lovely, all things sweet and sad,
Look forth from her dark eyes, where beauty dwells
As in a temple, and pale sorrow, clad
In mystic garments, weaves her shadowy spells.
All this she is to me, and I am glad,
And in her voice hear sounds of vesper bells.

KATIE LEIGH

I met, one summer morning,
 When dew lay on the grass,
Sweet Katie of the Meadows,
 A bonny, winsome lass;
And my heart rose up exultant,
 Yet startled and afraid,
To meet again those eyes whose glance
 A spell upon it laid.

Lightly she tripped to meet me
 Across the twinkling grass,
While the flowers blushed and trembled
 And brightened to see her pass;
I thought for a brief, dim instant
 To swiftly haste away,
But as I doubted, she called my name,
 And I could not choose but stay.

A bird in the hedgerow caroled
 To its mate in the maple tree,
And as I looked into Katie's eyes,
 My heart throbbed tremblingly;
For now they shone with merriment,
 And now grew dark and shy,
Till all their azure depths were changed
 Like a vexed April sky.

I said, "What is it, Katie?"
 With voice strange and dismayed;
"My pet lamb, John, has slipped its leash
 And to yon wood has strayed.

I can hear the tinkling of its bell
But dare not venture there"—
And a question then dawned in her eyes
Which seemed to me thrice fair.

"And you wish me to find it, Katie?"
"Oh, John, if you only would!"
And she nearer moved with brown hands clasped
In eager attitude.
"Well, wait for a few moments here,"
I said with an awkward bow,
And yet, as I turned, my heart rose up
Blither and bolder now.

Why was it? A new light in her eyes,
Or a new light in the day?—
Ah, me! I had long loved Katie,
And oft, in my bashful way,
Had lingered, hearing her low sweet voice,
For hours at the garden gate,
Longing to say what I never could say,
Though my heart cried, "Haste, ere too late!"

I think that Katie knew my mind,
And knew the thing I would say,
For when I would stammer and try to speak,
She would smile and look away;
Then, alas for my sudden courage,
And the hope too brief and bright!
The stars grew dark and the blind world reeled—
I could only say, "Good night!"

Thus ever I put my doom aside,
Till two long years had fled,
And still within my heart I bore
Its secret yet unsaid;

But when we met, that dewy morn,
Under the sunny skies,
My heart grew bright with a nameless light
That shone from her sweet blue eyes.

I vowed as I led the lost lamb back
Through the tangled wood and vine,
That now I would speak my love to her,
And ask her to be mine:
She stood by the hedge, nigh the maple tree,
In her beauty and her grace,
With the sunlight still in her azure eyes,
And the bloom of the morn on her face.

"Oh, thank you, John!" she said, and smiled
A smile like the summer bright,
And holding her hand for the hempen leash,
In mine I clasped it tight;
"Katie," I said, "I want to speak
What you have known so long—
I love you, Katie; tell me, sweet,
Do I do my heart a wrong?"

"For two long years I've borne my love,
Nor ever dared to speak—"
And looking down, I saw a flush
Had crept o'er either cheek;
"Do you love me, Katie? Speak," I said,
"May I call this dear hand mine?"
With a deeper flush she hid her face,
And whispered, "I am thine."

So the sun never shone so goldenly down,
And the sky was never so blue,
And the flowers were never so bright as we walked
Back over the morning dew;

The birds never sang so sweetly before,
Such a morn I had never seen;
And the sumac berries were never so red,
And the grass was never so green.

So the blue-bells merrily rang that day,
And the sumac fiercelier burned,
And the red rose changed to a deeper red,
And the white rose whiter turned;
The water lily hung its head
And blushed at the kiss of morn,
While Psyche laughed, and the wingéd Boy
Shrilled the blithe marriage horn.

When the leaves on the tree were tipped with flame,
And corn hung full on the ear,
When the red-cheeked apples fell from the boughs,
And the harvest was ripe of the year;
When aftermath was nigh its growth
In fields that summer had shorn,
Katie redeemed the promise she made
In the meadow that golden morn.

The years have gone with a noiseless tread,
And summer has come again,
The birds are fluting in field and wood,
And daisies are white in the lane;
The leaves are thick on the maple tree,
The corn's silk tassels wave,
And mellow flecks of sunshine play
In the grass on Katie's grave.

Another Katie roams those fields,
And she is fair to see,
With her mother's eyes and her mother's hair—
But not more fair than she;

And the same old tender dreams are hers,
Beneath the summer sky,
While her gentle heart its secret keeps,
For love can never die.

OUT OF THE SHADOWS.

A SONG

WITH VARIATIONS.

DEDICATION.

*O THOU who, in the sacred name of wife,
Shalt garner good from all the years to be—
Twin of my heart, O thou who unto me
Shalt yield the perfect flower of thy life—
Take these poor songs, faint echoes of past years,
Sung in the ample light of this rich morn,
Where Hope keeps watch beside her latest horn,
And Memory sits smiling through her tears*

OUT OF THE SHADOWS.

PART I.—EVENING.

I.

AMO.

I do not know that I could love her more;
I know that I could never love her less,
For none have ever felt her loveliness
Strike on their lives but that they did adore.
Where'er she goes there goes a light before,
And music in the motion of her dress;
And in her voice is such rich tenderness,
That eyes unused to weeping must run o'er
With blissful tears to hear her when she sings.
Nor do I marvel that her harp should sigh
Whene'er her white hands sweep its quivering
strings,
For that it cannot weep, but only cry
Melodiously the rapture that she brings.
To free her lot from sorrow, I would die!

II.

LOVE'S VAGARIES.

I often wonder, should I touch her hand,
If it would be like others I might clasp;
Or if it would not fall from out my grasp,
Unfelt and gradually as trickling sand:
Or if it would not burn me like a brand,
Or sharply sting as if I held an asp;
Or if I should not lose my breath and gasp,
That in her presence I should dare to stand.

But O, she seemeth me so far beyond,
That I dare never breathe her dear name, save
In holy sleep and dreams divinely fond,
Which to recall awake seems madly brave.
Alas! I feel indeed that I am bond
To her forever—though a willing slave.

III.

A PORTRAITURE.

She's very fair, and in her eyes
Her gentle spirit lies asleep,
Still as a star in evening skies
Mirrored by an untroubled deep.

The ruddy ripeness of her lip,
The rounded beauty of her cheek,
Mark her, of all, Eve's fairest slip,
The queenliest, yet most proudly meek.

I know she hath the stateliest form
That e'er was clothed with maiden grace,
And ne'er was neck more white and warm,
And ne'er was a more perfect face.

To type her brow, of saintliest white,
There's not a flower howso rare,
And all the glories of the night
Meet in the rich hue of her hair.

She wills to be not wholly known;
For, ever drawn into her rest,
With livelier tint and lovelier tone,
One knows not when she pleaseth best.

Her ways are winning, yet I think
She hath than all a nobler art—
Those virtues, sweeter far, that link
The angel to the woman's heart.

And thus I find her truer worth
In that which good alone hath given;
A tender being of the earth,
But breathing the fine air of heaven.

IV.

REMBRANDTESQUE.

A purple passion-flower at her feet,
And on her bosom a white lily lies;
And in the shadowy depth of her soft eyes
Her placid spirit lieth fair and sweet.
The shifting hues that o'er her features fleet
Are radiant of love's impassioned dyes,
And where the curves of shining shoulders rise
Her glossy locks in tangled ringlets meet.

Her faultless lips are parted in a song,
The words whereof are hard to understand
As a dead language or an unknown tongue,
And yet I know it must be something grand.
But if I say not this, I do her wrong:
She is the loveliest lady in the land.

V.

ON GUARD.

She's sweet and fair, but is not true,
And that, you know, is cause to rue,
For who would woo a fickle maid—
Would you?

She has bright eyes, but they deceive;
That too, you know, is cause to grieve,
For so in her none ever can
Believe.

Her lips are very ripe and red,
And lips are sweet, you know, *'tis said*;
But I would rather have her heart
Instead.

Or rather I would have them both,
For with the lips, you know, the troth
Is plighted, when the true heart is
Not loth.

Fie! I'll not fall into the net;
She's nothing but a slight coquette,
And such, you know, 'twere better to
Forget.

VI.

MY LOVE IS LIKE THE VASTNESS OF THE SEA

My love is like the vastness of the sea,
As deep as life, as high as heaven is high,
And pure as an unclouded summer sky,
And as enduring as eternity.

My love is that which was, and is to be,
Which knows no change, and which can never die;
Which all the wealth of Ophir could not buy,
Yet free to *one* as light and air are free.
O Love, thou puttest to shame the nightingale;
Thy lips, like bees, are fraught with hydromel;
Than lilies be, thy bosom is more pale;
Thy words are sweeter than a silver bell:
Yet time from thee thy beauties shall estrange,
But this my love can never suffer change.

VII.

FLOWER AND THORN

Like some rare flower of perfume divine
That bloomed beneath a garden hedge unseen,
Till favored hands by chance thrust back the screen,
And happy eyes saw it proud beauty shine;
So did I find thee, O thou Love of mine!
The fairest maid that ever walked the green
Glad earth, and regal as a Roman queen,
And lovely as a rose incarnadine.
O Love, I found thee, and my heart was glad
Of summer-tide; but I forgot—ah, vain!—
That brightest blooms with sharpest thorns are clad.
I cried, "O beautiful!" and sought to gain
Thee from thy solitude, when o'er my mad,
Wild ardor I felt love's most cruel pain!

VIII.

THE STATUE

I know not if it be the odorous air,
Or yonder royal lily's stately height,
Or if it be the tinkling fountain bright
In the midsummer moonlight sleeping there;
I know not, Love, if these have any share
In turning all my thoughts to thee to-night.

There in the dusk stands pale Mnemosyne,
One hand upon her brow, one on her heart
Pressed hard, as though she felt the cruel smart
Of some old wound afresh in memory:
Ah! now I know, Love, why I thought of thee;
Wan Memory feeleth how unkind thou art.

IX.

SIGN AND SYMBOL

Love, love, love!
The mystic voice of earth;
The song whose sudden changes move
From sorrow unto mirth.
Mark the symbol, mark the sign,
Beauty vain and youth divine:
A winged dart,
A bleeding heart—
Mortal hurts may never heal.
Vows forgotten, vows unspoken,
Broken bowl and pitcher broken,
Loosened cord and shattered wheel!

Love, love, O love!

The rapture and the wonder!
Evening star and morning bird,
Distant echo, dying word,
Stifled voice and song unheard,
And lute-string snapt asunder!

X.

A FANTASY

A passion-flower, a lily, and a dove;
A weary waste, heart hunger, and a thorn;
There, in the sunlight, far away, my Love
Beside the sea sits singing to the morn;
Here, in a lonely shadow-land, I move—
A silent shadow—hopeless and forlorn.

O voice of song! O song amid the flowers!
O wanderer fainting 'mid the thorns and sand!
Through all the long, glad light of summer hours,
O Love, thou sittest singing on the strand;
See, in the darkness here thy lover cowers;
O lead him, Love, from out this lonely land!

XI.

IN THE SHADOWS

Come, Love, and sit beside me where alone
I sit within the silent shadows here;
Come, Love, come and drop with me tear for tear,
And mingle with my moaning thy sad moan.

Come, Love, and take my hand within thine own,
And let me touch thy face and feel thee near,
And breathe thou on my brow, and in mine ear
Let fall the tender music of thy tone.
O Love, alone within this doleful gloom
Have I sat sorrowing since life's early morn
Lost in untimely blight its splendid bloom,
And all my soul with sullen grief is torn.
Come to me, Love, and lead me from my doom,
I am here in the darkness so forlorn!

XII.

DOOM

Like a wan maiden sitting in the night
Beside her dying lover, while no sound
Breaks the oppressive silence brooding round,
Save as she yearns for morning's anxious light,
Her heart leaps up and listens with affright
To midnight footsteps falling on the ground:
So sits my soul in darkness as profound,
And hearkening expectant, marks the flight
Of Time who, with vast pinions wide unfurled,
And broken scythe and shattered glass, sweeps down
Across the utmost boundaries of the world,
Between his lips that dread trump yet unblown.
From out the sky each starry light is hurled,
And chaos is of darkness the dread crown!

INTERLUDE

*NOT every king may wear a crown,
Nor kingly he alone
Whose heart beneath a purple gown
Throbs on the royal throne;
The kingliest spirits that have been
The world hath never known.*

*Not they who vaunt of lineage long,
And of their gentle blood,
Are peers to noble hearts and strong,
Or to the truly good;
Not all that wear a diadem
In courtly halls have stood.*

*And oft is stay'd deservèd meed,
And many the tales untold
Of high resolve and lordly deed
Would shame the knights of old;
That only angels chronicle
In characters of gold.*

*O wide is God's nobility,
Nor that which blood doth bind;
The kinship of humanity—
The realm of heart and mind:
From lowliest walks of life have sprung
The flowers of humankind.*

*Yet there is hope, though here unknown
Through all the world they move;
For them awaits a conqueror's throne;
They shall be crowned above:
But, ah, how sad their lot who live
Uncrowned of woman's love!*

PART II.—MIDNIGHT.

I.

COMPLAINT

Another! O Christ, can it be!
Will another love better than I
Whose love is as deep as the fathomless sea,
And as steadfast as stars in the sky?
Will she graciously yield to another's plea?
Be coldly deaf to my joyless cry?
Folded forever away from me—
Ah, better it were to die!

What could I give her more?
Nor time nor eternity
Can take or add to the boundless store
Of a love that never can die;
And yet she doth spurn it o'er and o'er,
With cruel scorn in her beautiful eye:
Like a shattered wreck on a lonely shore
My helpless soul doth lie.

Crowned with a thorny crown,
Scourged and crucified!
Hope's frail blossoms, in beauty blown,
Crushed by the foot of pride!
Ah, better indeed ere tears should drown
The light wherein life is glorified,
Under the sod to lay us down
And slumber side by side!

II.

MARAH.

Yea, Love! mayhap 'twere better
If thou and I should hide
Our hearts away beneath the grass
Upon the green hill-side;
And there with palms close folded
Above the peaceful breast,
Unheeded and unheeding,
Sleep on and take our rest.

I know the Spring would blossom,
And birds still build and sing;
That men would woo, and maidens wed,
And folly prune love's wing;
But thou and I should slumber,
Though stars forever set,
Forgetting to remember,
Remembering to forget.

III.

SYMPATHY.

I stood at sunset on a gentle hill,
And saw the twilight shadows slowly fall
And darken o'er the landscape spread below
More fair than any picture, while as yet
Against my forehead gleamed the massy gold
Of untrod mines within the western clouds.
Deft unseen hands had broidered every hill.
Below was darkness; all above was light.
The sky, a miracle of nameless hues,

I saw as one in an apocalypse.
Then like a sudden glory shot through gloom,
Upon my half-unconscious spirit burst
The boundless pity of the Universe.

IV.

NATURE'S MINISTRY.

Sweet nature hath a being like our own,
She hath her joys, she hath her secret pain;
She hath her memories, like the sad refrain
That haunts the heart when summer birds are flown.
We cannot have our sorrows all alone,
But nature shares them; when we weep, the rain,
Like tears, shines on the hill-side and the plain,
And when we laugh she echoes back our tone.
O myriad hearted nature! thine shall be
The reverence and the tender sacrifice
Of hearts that keep their first simplicity,
Such as we read in gentle maidens' eyes.
Though sight were blind, yet should our spirits see
In thee the semblance of God's Paradise.

V.

IF IT WERE.

Love, that thou lov'st me not, too well I know;
Yet shouldst thou look to-night on my dead face
For the last time on earth, and there shouldst trace
The silent meaning of a heavy woe,
Wouldst thou not feel a pang that it were so?
Would not regret within thy heart find place
That thou didst stay the guerdon and the grace
Thy lover so besought thee to bestow?

Wouldst thou not feel a want unknown before?
A something gone familiar grown so long?
A vanished light—a ship gone from the shore—
A presence past from out the world's great throng?
O Love, wouldst thou not miss the voice of yore?
The song-bird flown, wouldst thou not miss the song?

VI.

FORESHADOWINGS.

Lo! in the valley, Love, the galingale
Bends to the blast beside the river-shore,
And Autumn pipes forever more and more,
While Summer's slender voices faint and fail.
Lo! now the liveried leaf grows sere and pale—
A phantom of the glory gone before—
And in the woodland walks we knew of yore,
Long since the songster ceased his tuneful tale.
Love, let us love; life's Summer waneth soon;
Brief is the splendor of its fervent day;
For every blood-red rose of balmy June
Hath burst a tender bud of early May.
I unto thee would consecrate a boon;
O shall we love, or shall we still delay?

VII.

GONE.

Gone—and the sunlight gone, and gone the stars,
And gone earth's beauty with her in the west,
There yonder past the purple mountain's crest,
And where the orange evening's lingering bars

Grow pale before the flaming front of Mars.
Gone—and gone with her all that seemeth best.
Gone—and my heart is dead within my breast;
Nay, cleft with doubts like fiery scimitars.
Gone—and the music gone from earth and sky.
Gone—and the heavens glow like molten brass.
Gone—and the restless winds are hot and dry,
And parched and thirsty is the land. Alas!
It were a sweet relief if I could die,
And lie at rest beneath the blackened grass.

VIII.

SUPPLICATION.

O God, and dost thou mock us when we cry?
And wilt thou look upon our sharp distress,
Neglectful of our utter helplessness,
Nor heed nor help us though we were to die?
O takest thou no thought for those who lie
Stripped and half-dead with wounds and weariness
Among life's thorns, and wilt thou pitiless
Look on our hurts and pass us coldly by?
O Thou who in thy Son didst feel the blow
Of palm and spiteful scourge, the speechless pain
Of loveless solitude—Thou who didst know
The unutterable pangs of being slain
Of love for love—O end my bitter woe!
Yea, let me die, if so to die be gain!

IX.

UNREQUITED.

Not to be loved by one on whom the soul
Dotes madly, not to feel the secret bliss,
The solemn, sweet, long, lingering lover's kiss,
And that fine ecstasy beyond control,

Is empty darkness and eternal dole.

To fondly press a warm white hand and miss
An answering pressure, in that soft abyss
Of eyes to mark no lovelight, in the troll
Of that rich speech to hear no tender word
To voice dear love, no spoken syllable
Responsive to the passionate heart to tell
Its wild and yearning language hath been heard;
That loudly hath been smitten love's deep chord—
Is utter madness worse than death and hell!

X.

A FEAR.

A withering doubt hath seized upon my soul,
For thou mayst meet another, and forget
My lonely life—yea, think of me no more,
And walk the world with one will love thee less.

O dark with dolor is the morning sky,
And sad the pomp of Summer in its prime,
And chill the winds that o'er the wild white waste
Breathe desolation round the wintry world!

Beyond creation's utmost boundaries;
Beyond the farthest star that whirls in space;
Beyond that sea of blue whose billows break
Upon a strand of worlds—were rest indeed!

XI.

DESOLATION.

I know, I know I may not go
Through wind and winter weather,
To seek a place where roses blow,
And lilies bloom together.

I should not find them, and my gain
Would be a lost endeavor,
And empty hands and bitter pain,
Forever and forever.

I cannot weep, though I would reap
The joyful harvest sown in tears;
I cannot put my heart to sleep
Against the coming years.

If love be taken from my heart,
Wouldst seek for bud or beauty there?
From love life cannot thrive apart
And bloom divinely fair.

XII.

A WINTER HOPE.

O Winter, thou art warm at heart;
Thine every pulse doth throb and glow,
And thou dost feel life's joy and smart,
Beneath the blinding snow.

Thine is the scent of bursting bud
Of April shower and violet;
Thou feelest Spring in all thy blood
Yearn up like sweet regret.

Afar thou hear'st the song of birds,
And seest the bloom on Summer's cheek;
Thou catch'st the lowing of the herds,
The laughter of the creek.

Bland breezes up the southern slope
Of June come burdened with the breath
Of roses fresh and fair as hope
Triumphant over death.

O sweet and rare thy visions are—
The flashing scythe, the new-mown hay,
The reaper's dance beneath the star,
The splendor of the day;

The shining grass, the peaceful stream,
The purple beauty of the hill—
No frost can blight thy blessed dream,
Thy heart no wind can chill.

And I—ah me! I too above
The winter of my sharp distress,
May catch the vision of summer love,
And outstretched hands that bless.

XIII.

BY THE SEA.

O maiden watching by the wide, strange sea,
Hast thou a lover sailing o'er the main?
And dost thou feel the sweetly-bitter pain
Of a deferred but glad expectancy?
O hast thou watched the sun climb joyfully
Up the red east, then slowly drop again
Down the red west and into darkness wane,
And still thy lover hath not come to thee?
O maiden, let me take thy hand in mine,
And thou and I will sit together here,
And, gazing out across the bitter brine,
We'll mingle sob with sob and tear with tear;
For both are watchers by the dim deep sea
Of human life and love and destiny.

XIV.

IN SPRING.

O Love, the bliss of Spring is with us now;
The scent of bursting buds is in the air;
The panting bosom of the earth is bare,
She hath a crown of flowers on her brow.
List! music drops like rain from every bough,
And sounds of merry-making everywhere
Salute mine ears, and all the world is fair
With blush and bloom, but thou art fairer, thou.
O Love, come down from yonder sunless height;
Come down, O Love, for here are songs of mirth,
And love is here, and here are life and light,
But where thou sittest only Pride hath birth.
O Love, descend and gladden on my sight,
And dazzle with thy beauty all the earth!

XV.

FORGET-ME-NOT.

Blue little flower from the sunny dell,
Where yesterday I plucked thee all alone,
Go to her, tell her that I love her well,
And all life's still deep music is mine own.

Go to her, take message that I give;
It were far better that her soft blue eyes
Should shine one moment on thee, than to live
So brief a life beneath uncertain skies.

Go, in thine eloquence of beauty blest;
Go, and if haply it should fall thy lot
To lie one blissful instant on her breast,
In thy sweet language say, Forget me not.

XVI.

THE MINIATURE.

Two starry eyes, from out a floating dusk
Of cloud-like drapery, with a shadowy light
Of royal meekness in their depths, to-night
Gleam on mine own and fragrance of rose-musk
Steals round me. Softly each red lip doth busk
The other to a tender pout, and might
That veil be lifted from her shoulders white
By other hands, they were too harsh and brusque.
O little face shut in these ivory walls!

Like evening's single star to shipwrecked eyes
That keep their weary watch when twilight falls,
Or whitely distant sails that slowly rise
With hope and rescue in their signal calls—
So came ye to me, crowned with glad surprise!

XVII.

LOVE'S CONSOLATION.

I stood to-day beside her mother's tomb—
Her mother, who died when my love was young;
And thought, when all is said and all is sung,
Is this the end of life's bliss and bloom?
O this the end—decay, and dust and gloom?
The heart forever still, and still the tongue,
Gone triumph and despair, the last knell rung,
Deep rest and sleep, deep rest, nor doubt nor doom?
O what thy largess, life, if this be all!
The guerdon what of every earthly ill?
Ah! Hope were blind, and vainly would she call,
And Faith were impotent to do her will,
If this the end: but sweeter lot must fall;
Love whispereth, "Beyond is something still!"

XVIII.

DEATH'S MYSTERY.

O death, thou mystery of folded hands,
And pulseless heart, and unresponsive lips,
What secret dost thou hide in the eclipse
Of thy dread presence? O, from out all lands,
Beneath all skies, from ocean's wreck-strewn strands,
Where bones lie bleaching by the shattered ships;
From out the engulfing wave that softly slips
With treacherous kisses up the yellow sands;
From world-old battle-fields, whereon have bled
And died earth's heroes; from the quiet green
Of country church-yards; from the narrow bed
Of many a long-forgotten king and queen—
There cometh no whisper from the countless dead
To tell what they have felt, or heard, or seen.

XIX.

I KNOW THEE, DEATH.

I know thee, death, thou'rt he who once did lay
Some potent spell on a dear friend of mine,
And then the light of love surceased to shine
In the fixed eyes, and slowly died away
From the pale lips the words that love would say,
Nor kiss nor call could win a single sign
Of recognition. Yea, I know thee, thine,
O death, is the all-mighty power to slay.
What terrible enchantment dost thou weave,
Thou fleshless sorcerer, that they who fall
Under thy subtle influence cannot cleave
The invisible bonds that bind them?—Nay, not all
The strenuous cries of those who sorely grieve,
Can pierce the silence of thine earthy pall.

XX.

DEATH AND NIGHT.

The bearded grass waves in the summer breeze;
The sunlight sleeps along the distant hills;
Faint is the music of the murmuring rills,
And faint the drowsy piping of the bees.
The languid leaves scarce stir upon the trees,
And scarce is heard the clangor of the mills
In the far distance, and the high, sharp trills
Of the cicada die upon the leas.
O death—what art thou? Hast thou peace like this?
Or, underneath the daisies, out of sight,
Hast thou in keep some higher, calmer bliss?
Ah me! 'tis pleasant to behold the light,
And missing this, O death, would we not miss
That weariness which makes us love the night?

XXI.

BRING THEM NOT BACK.

Yet, O my friend—pale conjurer, I call
Thee friend—bring, bring the dead not back again,
Since for the tears, the darkness and the pain
Of unrequited friendship—for the gall
That hatred mingles with fond love—for all.
Life's endless turmoil, bitterness and bane,
Thou hast given dreamless rest. Still let the rain,
And sunshine, and the dews from heaven fall
Upon the graves of those whose peaceful eyes
Thy breath hath sealed forever. Let the song
Of summer birds be theirs, and in the skies
Let the pale stars keep vigil all night long.
O death, call not the holy dead to rise,
Again to feel the cold world's ruth and wrong.

XXII.

ALONE, YET NOT ALONE.

Nursed up in loneliness, with mine own soul
The one companion of my days and hours;
Fed on the light of nature, as the flowers
Are fed on the invisible motes that roll
Through the quick ether; feeling the control
Of that God-man who once with matchless powers
Trod the far hills of Galilee, who towers
High on his cross above the shining goal
That this world's martyrs die to win; alone,
Yet not alone, my heart hath converse had
With earth's great sages: the inarticulate tone
Of singing birds, the murmur sweet and sad
Of meadow streams—O Love, these things have grown
Into my life; yet love alone makes glad.

XXIII.

RETURNED.

How all the weary months have fled
I scarcely know; I only knew
That still the rose its petals shed,
The sun still drank the dew.

And thou art come, and with thee light
And love and beauty back to earth;
O bloom and fruitage after blight,
Abundance after dearth!

XXIV.

A JEWEL.

Love, shouldst thou bid me pluck down out of heaven,
To blaze within those glorious locks of thine—
Gems never queen yet wore—the shining Seven,
I could not gain them; I am not divine.

If thou shouldst bid me plunge into the deep,
And seek a pearl such as no human eye
E'er saw, or mortal dreamed of in his sleep,
I could not win it, though I were to die.

Yet such a jewel as time cannot defile,
Nor thieves break through and steal, nor fortune dull,
I give thee, and thou spurnest with a smile
Severely cold yet chastely beautiful.

XXV.

LOVE'S MIST.

As mountains folded in a misty veil
Are hidden when the heaven makes complaint,
Their beauty seen not, save where, few and faint,
The wondrous colors glimmer ghostly pale;
Nor seen the lovely tints that downward trail
From airy heights no human hand could paint,
Nor beauteous shapes that, without flaw or taint,
Across the living landscape slowly sail:
So, shrouded in the mists of thy reserve,
O Love, not thy true loveliness appears;
Nor tender glow of eyes, nor dainty curve
Of smiling lip, nor song for lover's ears.
Love, surely thou wouldst true love's meed deserve!
I see not half thy beauty for my tears.

XXVI.

A LOVER'S PSALM.

What if the morn no more should break,
And all the stars should cease to shine,
Wouldst thou still love for dear love's sake,
And count love's light divine?

If all the hills stood sunset-flushed,
And o'er them, breathing summer air,
Bright Beauty like a goddess blushed,
Wouldst thou hold love more fair?

And, ah! what if the flowers were not,
And hues should fade from sea and sky?
Wouldst still grant love a happier lot,
Though such sweet things could die?

What if the music of the spheres,
Mixed with Amphion's mellow lute,
Should softly strike on mortal ears,
Wouldst bid love's voice be mute?

Or if the morning stars made moan,
And birds were dumb for evermore,
Wouldst thou believe love's troubled tone
Less tender than before?

Ah, Love! bring me no bridal dower,
Save love that hath its own delight
Beyond a song, or star, or flower,
For love is infinite.

XXVII.

A VIGIL.

Down by the shore of the gray-lipped sea,
Down where the caverns are dark and deep,
Where the white gull screams when the wind goes free,
And the breakers roar and the mad waves leap,
I sat, and the moon was a mystery,
And the world was lost in sleep.

I heard no sound from the outer vast,
Though the spirit of storms was wild that night;
I heard no sound from the dreadful past,
Though a loud voice wailed from that land of blight;
I knew death rode on the bitter blast,
But my heart was calm and light.

For a thought of the morning came,
And the pulse in my bosom beat
Like a melody born of a musical name,
And the time grew strangely sweet;
And my life rose up like a fragrant flame,
And a blossoming world at my feet.

O sorrow was on the sea that night,
And death in its awful din,
And the white gull screamed in her lonely flight,
But my soul was calm within;
For life had climbed to a holier height,
And love was free from sin.

XXVIII.

THE MORNING COMETH.

O sad the night to tired eyes
Long burdened with the weight of tears;
But sweet the blush of eastern skies,
When morning's light appears.

Yet sweeter far, when death's dark night
Hath sealed on earth our aching eyes,
To see in heaven God's glorious light
Leap up immortal skies.

XXIX.

IN THE TWILIGHT.

Hope in the orient, hope faint and pale;
Cheat not thyself, O heart, lest faith should fail,
Nor cheat despair:
Hope is not always kind.
Yon lark, whose music thrills the morning air,
Whose winnowing pinions cleave the sobbing wind—
The wordless prayer
Of weary earth for rest—
Is surer sign unto the tired sight,
Tired of watching through the long sad night
For tardy dawn to light the starless skies,

Than yon uncertain white.
O heart, stir not within my breast,
Stir not, O heart, by night so long oppressed,
Lest yonder hint of morning cheat mine eyes.
Sweet Pity hath assumed a strange disguise,
Sweet Pity to proud Love so near akin;
For yestermorn, as through the fields I walked,
When all the world rang with the joyful din
Of wingèd voices in the earth and sky,
I met her—her, the loveliest in the land,
And, with a soft compassion in her eye,
She gave the small white lily of her hand
To me, who hearkened dumbly while she talked;
And though I cannot now recall her words,
I could not hear for her sweet voice the birds.
Ah me! Ah me!
The very grass was grand!
The very grass o'er which she moved away,
And heaven drew nearer earth that golden day.

XXX.

HEART'S-EASE.

Life must have its dreary days;
Heart, look up, be brave and strong!
Darkened all thy devious ways,
Lost thy hopes in life's dim maze,
Yet shall blame give way to praise,
Right shall surely conquer wrong.

Is it grievous to remember?
Brings the past a bitter boon?
Cover up each old dead ember
Of the long, long past November
And the chill and dark December;
Naught can gloom the smile of June.

This the lesson of the flower—
All who wait, wait not in vain:
Fret not, then, when shadows lower;
Whether sunshine, whether shower;
Know that in the darkest hour
Pleasure follows after pain.

INTERLUDE.

*I SAW in heaven a solitary star
Rise out of darkness clothed in living light,
And speed its shining message from afar
Across the lonely chaos of the night.
The lesser Bear about the Boreal pole,
Like a worn traveler on a weary march,
Had in its cycle well-nigh ceased to roll,
And pale the stars grew in that world-wide arch.
But now, when other lustres had waxed dim,
And night was burden in the depth of space,
Up from behind the faint horizon's rim
Arose a fuller glory into place.
And there it burned, with radiance newly born,
Till night her ebon wings had closely furled,
And in the east the ruddy light of morn
Shook like a sudden splendor o'er the world.
O blessed lesson! In life's troubled night,
From out the darkness shall arise a hope
That, crescent, shall grow brighter and more bright,
Till through the gloom we shall no longer grope;
No longer grope; and upon aching eyes
Shall strike the morn, and night shall pass away,
And from behind the veil, across the skies,
Shall burst the dawn of Love's eternal day.*

PART III—MORNING.

AT DAWN.

The long night draweth to its close;
Behold! the daybreak doth appear,
And in the east the orange-rose
Of morning shineth clear.

The dew-drop glistens on the spray,
And o'er the lush green meadow-grass,
Parting the folded mists away,
The whistling reapers pass.

With mellow voice of milk-maid blends
The lowing of the distant kine,
And faintly down the hollow glens
Morn's dying star doth shine.

O sweet to feel the life of dawn
The bounding pulses thrill along,
And sweet to hear, o'er lea and lawn,
The songster's matin song.

And sweet to see, when storm and night
Are past, the day-star beam above;
Ah! Paradise is surely light,
And God eternal love!

II.

DOWN THE LANE

Blossom here at my feet,
Muffled in mosses and fern,
O was it not here that she passed to the street,
With a gracious bow, as I saw her turn,
And a marvelous smile and sweet?

O here in your still retreat,
Blooming in beauty alone,
No fairer flower than you, I weet,
In a royal robe has shone;
And yet her array was more complete,
And her beauty rarer blown.

Now tell me if she be true;
Your petals shall prophesy;
'Tis meet that they should, for they are blue,
And blue is her beautiful eye;
Yea, blossom, bluer than you,
And bluer than yon blue sky;—
Not false? Ah, now what shall I do?
Sweet thing, I fear that you lie!

III.

A BIRTHDAY SONG.

No slight boon have the changeful years
Brought unto thee, O virgin heart!
As flowers wet with dewy tears,
I watch the buds of hope dispart,

While April merges into May,
Thy life's sweet April,
Love.

This is the time when roses bloom,
And thee, my rose, my fairest flower,
My one sweet blossom in the gloom
My own life hath foreboding shower,
I greet upon thy natal day;
Spurn not the greeting,
Love.

Life of my life; love of my love,
Bless God for thy nativity!
Thou art my star, my hope, my dove,
My life is stay'd in thee.
Fold thou no meed from me away;
Love's guerdon, Love, is
Love!

IV.

LOVE BROOKS NOT DELAY.

Days and sennights, months and years—
Time hath known no lapse;
Gloom and glory, smiles and tears—
Many are love's mishaps.
Blight and blossom, frost and fire—
Beauty fadeth fast;
Love consumeth of desire,
Summer soon is past.
Dawn and darkness, morn and eve,
Golden locks and gray;
Hearts that wait can only grieve;
Love brooks not delay!

V.

A MEMORY.

It cometh again and again—
The ghost of a melody;
With an under-sound of secret pain
In its oft-repeated, faint refrain—
The song that she sang to me.

The song of yesternight;
An idyl pathetic and sweet;
A song that rose with a strange delight,
Till it fell like a wounded bird in flight—
And I knelt in tears at her feet.

I hear it, and still shall hear;
The voice of a day that is past;
With its hidden pain, and hope, and fear,
'Twill haunt my life with its sorrowful cheer,
Till I die at her feet, at last!

VI.

INCOGNITO.

Lo! I wander in a maze;
Laughing lips, and grieving eye;
Smiling blame, and frowning praise—
Strange and wondrous are love's ways,
Evermore a mystery!

VII.

AN IDYL OF LIFE.

Love, if beyond the azure overhead
There be a place where happy spirits meet,
Nor marriage is, nor tears, nor any dead,
To die how passing sweet!

Past all the cruel fever and the pain,
Past barren hopes, and plans, and foolish fears,
Past all annoy, to die indeed were gain—
The meed of longing tears.

Only to sleep a long and dreamless sleep,
Nor heed the sunshine, nor the gentle showers,
Nor shepherd's song, nor sheep-bell on the steep,
Nor smell the fragrant flowers;

Only to sleep, nor see the summer sky;
To sleep, nor feel the joy that life can give— —
Ah, Love, though it may be a gain to die,
Yet it is sweet to live!

VIII.

SONG.

If thou be true, dear Heart,
Or false, I cannot tell;
I know how beautiful thou art,
I know I love thee well;
I know I'm sad when thou art sad,
And more than glad when thou art glad.

And yet, I would not keep
Thee from one pang or pain,
If sown in sorrow, thou shouldst reap
Of good one golden grain;
For so the seed, sown tearfully,
In flowers of light should gathered be.

IX.

LEAVE ME NOT YET.

Leave me not yet, O Love,
Leave me not yet;
The acacia and the columbine
With dew are scarcely wet,
And yonder fragrant eglantine
Still wooes the mignonette.
Not yet, O Love, not yet!

Delay a moment, Love,
O make delay!
In purple chambers of the west
We'll watch the dying day,
And from the foreland and the height
Scare shadowy night away.
Delay, O Love, delay!

Haste not to go, dear Love,
O make no haste!
Not yet the lily foldeth up
Her sweetness—art more chaste?
Not yet doth modest Dian fleet
Across the dusky waste.
Dear Love, O make no haste!

Heed not the darkness, Love,
Nor shadows heed;
I see faint Hesper in the heaven,
And the firefly in the mead;
But if thou leave me now, O Love,
Then cometh night indeed.
'O Love, give night no heed!

X.

CARMEN NOCTIS.

Now sleep hath kissed the white brow of my Love,
And closed her pearly lids with touches light,
While round her, cloud-like, musically move
The wingèd dreams of night.

The river murmurs by its hidden bowers,
In monotones that swell or faintly swoon;
And sighing out their souls, the love-sick flowers
Yearn to the pallid moon.

From out the dingle ripples sweet and clear
The plaintive love-song of sad Philomel,
And Echo, o'er the solitary mere,
Mocks back her ritournel.

There is a rustle through the damask fold
Of curtains at the casement wreathed with vine,
And Notus, through the drapery fringed with gold,
Steals in with song divine:

Steals in across the quaintly carven plinth,
With gifts from lands where Summer ever smiles,
With subtle perfume of the hyacinth,
And spice from Indian isles:

Steals in to sacrifice at Beauty's shrine;
He who alone may tread that fair domain—
O dreamer from the southern palm and pine,
Thy worship is in vain!

The maiden sleeps. Keep watch, O silent stars!
Keep watch, sweet Luna, now my lady sleeps!
Till glad Aurora comes, watch, ruddy Mars;
Till Tithon newly weeps!

XI.

HESPER.

O star of the pale-bosomed night,
Let thy smile re-illumine the world;
Like a garment the darkness clothes valley and height,
In the dim-caverned west dies the opaline light,
And the pinions of sleep are unfurled.

Come forth from thy tent in yon cloud,
That thy beauty may gladden the skies;
See, the mountains lie folded in mist like a shroud,
And the river that loves thee is singing aloud,
And the summer wind seeks thee with sighs.

In her chamber, 'mid curtains of white,
My lady lies silent in sleep;
O star, shed thy balm through the strokes of the night,
Charm the hours, as they go, that her dreams may be
bright,
And the hush of the darkness be deep.

And lo! when the gates of the dawn
Shall unfold, and the shepherdess leads
Her white flock to feed on some high dewy lawn,
And the mists and the visions of night are withdrawn,
And the rivulet sings through the meads,—

Then fair shall my lady appear,
And sweet as the breath of the May;
And her heart shall be light as the heart of the year,
And shall throb into song, as she pauses to hear
The sound of the wakening day.

XII.

MORNING SONG.

Star of the morning, arise!

Arise in the light of thy love;

Faintly the dawn in the orient skies

Awakes from its dreaming the dove.

O Love,

Shine on the dark world with thine eyes!

Come out from the dim land of dreams;

Come out, for the dawning is near;

In the heart of the lily the dew-drop gleams,

In the eye of the rose is a tear.

Ah, Dear,

Aurora's light already beams.

She cometh from over the sea,

And a hint of her coming was heard,

When the flowers unfolded o'er woodland and lea,

And a song shook the breast of a bird;

It stirred

The whole sleeping world, save thee.

O blithe is the voice of the rill,

And the print of the sandaled feet

Of Morning shines on yonder hill,

And the day goes far and fleet,

O Sweet,

The day—and thou slumberest still!

XIII.

FIOR DI LEVANTE.

I think thou canst not be, Love, what thou art,
Or if so be, thou seemest more than all,
For when thou speak'st I hear the blithe birds call,
And in thee there is something which is part
Of yon blue cope and ruddy shafts that dart
From out the sunset, of the mountains tall,
Of laughing brook and loud-voiced waterfall,
And e'en the love that blossoms in my heart.
I hear in sobbing of the solemn sea,
In sighing shell upon the silent shore,
In distant song of stars, in whispering lea,
A frail, faint music I have known before—
A voice like unto thine, yet not of thee,
For than all these thou still art something more.

O Love, thou art a part of that rich flower
Which there in light unfolds a purple bloom;
Whose delicate aroma fills my room
With hints of thine own meekly regal power.
Ah, yes! I know thee now; for but this hour,
Athwart the sunlight there, with fine perfume
A shadow fell from out the purple gloom—
As falls the mist-blue light when tempests lower—
And took a shape of fragrance, which was thine.
O Zante! thou and my sweet Love are one!
O Zante! it is said thou art divine;
For thou in Hyacinthus' blood wast sown
In loveliness, and like this Love of mine
Art beautiful, as she is Beauty's own!

XIV.

A LOVER'S VESPER SONG.

The blue bends down to kiss the hills,
The hills rise up to kiss the blue,
They clasp and kiss at their own sweet wills—
Love, why not I and you?

The sea leaps forward to the land,
The land folds close the amorous sea;
They meet and marry on the strand—
Love, why not thus meet me?

Look off, and mark the fervid west,
How night stoops down to woo the day,
How day leans on night's throbbing breast—
Sweet Love, shall we delay?

The hills and sky, the land and sea,
The day and darkness teach us this,—
That you must wed, dear Love, with me,
Or life's best guerdon miss.

XV.

APOLOGY.

O what a life to live, Dear,
If love were not, if love were not!
Or what might Heaven give, Dear,
Of sweeter lot, of sweeter lot?
No angel form in woman's guise,
To give the great world birth,
With hidden wings and holy eyes
Might meekly walk the earth.

O what a death to die, Dear,
Bereft of love, bereft of love!
For torn the fondest tie, Dear,
What hope above, what hope above?
Ah, weary were the years, I trow,
If close within the heart
We kept no shrine where we might bow
From all the world apart.

XVI.

THIS TRUTH THE WORLD'S.

This truth the world's, that whoso loves is free;
No cankering fetters mar his glad estate;
That happy man who finds indeed his mate
Mounts straightway up into eternity.
He is not slave to time, nor trouble he;
Not bondman unto any cruel fate;
He knoweth not the pain of those who wait
For that which never was and cannot be.
Free of the free, and blessed of the blest;
Prince-prophet who hath a divine foretaste
Of that rich joy which spirits feel above;
Glad heart that entereth early into rest;
Blithe pilgrim o'er life's drear and desert waste,
Thou art immortal. Yea, for God is love!

XVII.

SONG.

O roses, Love, are blushing red,
And bright the lily's bloom,
And sweet and rare, beyond compare,
The morning's rich perfume.
A braver beauty never shone
Beneath serener skies,
And ne'er have blown in tint and tone
Blooms of diviner dyes;
And thou too, Love, art fairer grown
To love-anointed eyes.

XVIII.

LOVE'S HEALING.

Why should thy songs be ever gay,
O love so full of grief and pain?
I sing another song to-day
That hath a sad refrain:
A little lay
Like tender April rain.

Love's tears make love's bright blossoms grow—
O blessed be the frequent showers!
Nor summer sun, nor winter snow,
Can yield such priceless dowers:
It rains, and lo!
The earth is full of flowers.

A cloud, like an unwelcome truth,
Oft in its bosom bears a boon
We wis not of until, forsooth,
It droppeth like a tune—
O heart of ruth,
Like dew in nights of June.

Come shine or shower, come bliss or bane,
What matter, if they healing bring?
Love binds but with a golden chain,
Each link a wedding ring.
O happy twain
Who weep, and weeping sing!

XIX.

MY LADY.

As shine from yonder dusky skies
The stars that fret the pallid night,
So shine my Lady's heavenly eyes,
To fill the world with tender light.

Her voice is sweet as tinkling rills
That meet and mingle musically,
And trip together down the hills,
To lose themselves within the sea.

Not sweeter is the breath of June,
That stirs her garments lovingly,
Than are the words which, like a tune,
Fall from her lips melodiously.

Her hair is like a golden mesh
Wherein the tangled sunshine lies,
And like primroses, fair and fresh,
Her cheeks the dewy morning dyes.

As leans the lily on its stalk,
When lightly falls the wooing shower,
So leans she from the garden walk,
To catch the scent of some rare flower.

The earth is fairer since she is,
And nearer leans the happy sky;
And half his terrors death shall miss,
Because my Lady, too, must die.

XX.

LOVE'S MIRROR.

Go to thy mirror, Love, where thou may'st view
The rose of beauty blooming in thy face,
And chide me not that, dazzled by thy grace,
I give thee praise thou countest not thy due.
A lovelier lip than thine I never knew,
And never life in fairer form found place,
And Time, methinks, were he but to erase
One lovely line, forevermore must rue.
O love were slain of love, if in thy pride
Of secrecy thou shouldst veil every charm,
And that whereof he thrives to love denied,
Himself must to himself do mortal harm.
Nay look, Love, in thy glass, nor longer chide
When love in passionate praises waxeth warm.

XXI.

THE DREAM.

Last night I dreamed that thou wast by my side,
And thy sweet voice fell flute-like on mine ear,
In accents solemn, low, yet silver-clear,
And thou didst look upon me tender-eyed.
Then all my passionate longing and my pride,
All my dull pain of hopelessness and fear,
Vanished like mist upon a mountain mere
Which the warm sun salutes at morning-tide.
All night my heart was full of speechless bliss
And though thou wast less human than divine,
I felt at last I nevermore should miss
From out my life that loveliness of thine;
For when our souls closed in one swooning kiss,
I knew eternally that thou wast mine.

XXII.

SONG.

Fly, robin, fly!
Fly to the nest of thy love;
Fly for the evening star is on high,
And the moon is over the grove.
Fly, robin, fly away,
For night is come with shadows gray,
O fly away, away!

Fly, robin, fly!
Fly at the call of thy mate;
Fly, for the darkness covers the sky,
And it is hard to wait.
Fly, robin, do not stay;
Hush! it is no longer day;
O haste away, away!

Go, O foolish heart
Go, with the robin's flight;
No longer keep from truth apart;
Go, seek thy Love to-night.
O hasten, heart, away;
They only lose who make delay;
O heart, away, away!

XXIII.

REVELATION.

Great God! what was it gave me utterance
To-night, and nerved my heart, that I did dare
To brave my fate, and blindly throttle chance,
And gain a good that seems too great to bear?

O peace and plenty after plague and dearth!
Not wholly dark the world, nor drear the way.
God grant I may not fail from off the earth,
Nor find that I have dreamed with breaking day!

XXIV.

CAROL.

Night from dark world
Her mantle hath drawn,
And low on thy lattice, Love,
Trembles the dawn.
Morn from the orient
Cometh in pride
Of saffron and crimson,
And fair as a bride.
In thy garden the roses
Are lying awake,
And never a moment
Of slumber they take;
They glow with the tidings
They bear, Love, for thee—
A message of morning
From over the sea.
O tarry no longer
With dull-lidded sleep;
Fly the false visions
That have thee in keep!
Rise in thy loveliness,
Morning-to-be;
Lo, I am waiting, Love,
Dawn thou on me!

XXV.

ALL' ALBA.

'Twas morning, and the western sky was dark;
'Twas morning, and the west was drowned in gloom;
But in the east, as if a rose did bloom
Within the doubtful darkness, grew a mark
Of rosy light and spread in a wide arc,
And higher up the heavens slowly clomb.
Then those great clouds that in the west did loom
Were sundered quite and vanished. A swift lark
Rose from the meadow straight up in the sky,
And from his breast upbubbled a sweet song
That fainter grew and fainter, as more high
He rose, yet seemed in rapture to prolong,
Until in heaven it did fail and die,
Below reëchoed by a countless throng.

The world is very warm and full of light;
Ay, full of light and beauty and of song;
I cannot understand how I so long
Have shivered 'neath the sombre wings of Night.
I cannot find a face that is not bright
And glowing with the gladness of a strong,
Great love, and on the earth there is no wrong,
Nor mildew, sorrow, care, nor any blight.
There is a music o'er the whole wide world,
And choral voices hymning in love's sphere,
And like the Sphinx, Despair her wings hath furled,
And very dull and heavy is her ear;
Within my heart there lies a hope impearled—
A new-found hope: O joy is everywhere!

XXVI.

LOVE DOTH NOT IN CASTLES DWELL.

Love doth not in castles dwell,
Nor in cot nor palace he;
Not on land nor on the sea,
Nor by flood nor fell.

Love is neither here nor there;
Not in cradle, nor in grave,
Not in dungeon with the slave;
Love is everywhere.

Love is not a poet's dream;
'Tis not that, nor is it this—
Pain or pleasure, bale or bliss;
Neither gloom nor gleam.

Love cannot be told by years;
Never young, and never old;
Never bought, and never sold,
Save for smiles or tears.

Not below, nor yet above;
Neither is he bond nor free;
Lo, behold the mystery:
Love is—only love!

XXVII.

LOVE HATH COME TO ME.

My heart sings as the birds sing
In the soft summer weather,
And all the little loves take wing
Round the green world together;
The fountains purl a sweeter tune,
The flowers are fairer far to see,
And richer is the life of June,
Since love hath come to me.

It was but yester-even,
Amid the shadows gray,
True heart to heart was given
Forever and a day;
O earth, such happy, happy words
Bring Eden back again to thee!
Ah, sing your blithest, merry birds,
For love hath come to me.

Sound through the dusk, O whip-poor-will,
Sound, while the slow stars brighten,
Your ritournel from hill to hill,
Till morning skies shall lighten;
Old world, thou yet art very bright;
Let shine or shadow round me be,
I'll welcome day, or welcome night,
Since love hath come to me.

XXVIII.

A SONG OF THE SUNSET.

List, Love, oh list!
Hear'st thou the voice of the trees?
Hear'st thou the music of the mist
Stealing along the leas?
O, sweet yon orange light
Against the deep sky's blue repose,
And bland the breath of the summer night,
And rare the scent of the rose.

Look, Love, oh look
At the silvery shine of the stars,
Beginning to tremble where lately shook
The sunset's crimson bars!
And there in the deepening dusk,
Across the billowy lawn,
The lilies lie in a dream of musk,
Awaiting the dewy dawn.

O Love, the night is come,
And where the reeds and rushes quiver
The voices of the day are dumb,
O'er hill and field and river;
And nature's fairest gems are strown
Adown that radiant way
The spicy breath of morn is blown,
Upon earth's bridal day.

Sleep, Love, oh sleep!
For night on the weary world
Hath flitted down yon azure steep,
And her dew-wet wings are furled;
O tenderly on tired eyes
She lays her shadowy hand,
And rich the balm and sweet the calm
O'er all the quiet land.

XXIX.

OVERWROUGHT.

Last night, beneath the summer stars we stood,
And with her fragrant breath against my cheek,
I twined her hair in fashion of the Greek,
And from the roses round about us strewed
I made for her a crown as red as blood.

The fountain rose from out the white swan's beak
And fell with music; still she did not speak,
Nor did I break the silence of her mood,
But marked the humor of her maiden art.

She stood with eyes downcast, and I could hear—
Or fancied so—the beating of her heart.

She stooped to pluck a red rose growing near,
And as she thrust the thorny boughs apart,
I kissed her peerless cheek, and lo, a tear!

XXX.

DOUBTED

What? dost thou doubt me, Love?
Have I waited, then, in vain?
Doth naught that I suffered prove
My passion is deeper than pain?
Constant when thou didst scorn;
Patient when thou didst spurn;
Hoping, though hope of hope were shorn;
Is there something still to learn?

Nor time, nor space, nor circumstance
Can make or mar again;
A sovereign ordered not of chance,
Love is not slave to men.
Yet fearest thou that he will change,
Now love to love is kind?
Ah, thou forgettest he may not range,
For love was always blind!

XXXI.

THE GIFT.

See what I bring to thee, dear Love, dear Love,
To type the pure affection of my heart;
I might not bring an earnest to impart
How pure it is so well as this white dove.
And yet were I to seek by this to prove
My innocence of any specious art,
I might defeat myself and in the part
Of arrant knave, or fool, or jester move.
O yet believe me by this snow-white bird—
By every agony that doth inure
The heart to waiting and to hope deferred—
By every hope that ever did endure
Against a blighting scorn or bitter word—
My trust is loyal, my affection pure!

XXXII.

FORBEARANCE.

That I should love thee seemeth, Love, most meet;
For who that once hath looked in thy true eye,
And felt thy maiden soul's white purity,
Could other than do homage at thy feet?
But, ah! I wonder, Love, when I repeat
Love's oft-told tale and to thee madly cry,
Thou dost not spurn my presence utterly,
Or swiftly from my passionate arms retreat.
O Love, that I should even dare to hear
One uttered syllable of thine, or hold
For one brief moment thy warm hand, nor fear
To sit beside thee, seemeth overbold.
Ah! lover never yet was suffered near
A mortal maid of so divine a mould!

XXXIII.

LOVE'S VICTORY.

Love, should I find thee other than I deem—
Less noble than I hold thee in my thought—
Then might the potent spell which love hath
wrought,
Fade like the baseless tissues of a dream;
For if thou be not that which thou dost seem,
My reason to my reason this hath taught—
That though thou be with outward beauty fraught,
It can no want of inward grace redeem.

But, ah! I wrong thee by this cruel doubt,
That ever thou couldst so dissimulate;
And now my love-wise heart doth reason flout,
That he should dare presume on love's estate;
And sorely pressed in an inglorious rout,
He flies the field and yields the spoil to fate.

XXXIV.

RECOMPENSE.

Out of the darkness, out of the night,
Out of the shadows of dole and dread,
Out of the bitterness, out of the blight;
O joy! let the dead past bury its dead.

For the hurt there is healing; for weary ones rest;
Comfort for those who in loneliness weep;
Lo! the last sun sinks away in the west,
And so He doth give His belovèd ones sleep.

Large is the guerdon, O Life, that thou givest;
Recompense sweeter than rest there is none;
O heart, it is thine! be glad that thou livest!
Sweet, sweet is the calm when the tempest is done!

XXXV.

EPINICION.

And thou art mine, and mine are love and peace;
Yea, thou and these are mine forevermore;
The cold dark Winter of my life is o'er,
And Spring comes in crowned with the year's increase.

Yea, mine for time and for eternity;
To keep and cover here within my heart
Through all the years, and nevermore to part—
Nay, death could not dissever thee and me!

Mine only, and the night is overpast;
Mine, and the morning moves upon the sky;
Mine, mine alone! O joy to live or die!
Through flood and fire to the palm at last!

L'ENVOY.

AN AUTUMN SONG.

O HEARKEN, Love, across the fell,
And up the flaming dingle,
The lusty songs of reapers swell,
And sheep bells faintly mingle.
The sumac on the hillside burns,
And, each pale leaf adorning,
The yellow sunlight softly yearns
Through this October morning.

Adown the aisles of yonder wold,
Dear Love, do you remember
How gladly, hand in hand, we strolled
And thought not of December?
But now the golden-rods alone
Stand in the sun and shiver,
Where then a summer glory shone
By brook and rill and river.

O Love, we will not mourn the past,
Though Autumn cometh quickly,
And round the heart death's icy blast
Shall sow its sorrows thickly;
For in God's heaven the winter comes
With desolation never,
But there perennial Summer blooms
Forever and forever.

TEMPLE BELLS.

FORGIVEN.

"Qui sine peccato est vestrum, primus in illam lapidem mittat."

"HATH no one cast a stone at thee?"

"Nay, Lord," she humbly said,
And from the pavement tearfully
She raised her fallen head.

With anxious hands her burning face
She sought to hide; her hair,
A midnight stream, with careless grace
Flowed round her shoulders bare.

"Go thou and sin no more." His eyes
Like heaven above her bent,
And tremulous with awed surprise
She from Him slowly went.

RAIN ON THE SEA.

It needs not, Lord, that thy full hand should pour
This bounty of the sweet and cooling rain
Upon the brimming ocean's sterile plain,
When for one little portion of this store
Somewhere the famished earth prays o'er and o'er;
Why shouldst thou cast this largess thus in vain
To melt into the wide and barren main,
When the long drouth lays waste the teeming shore?

Forgive us, Lord, that in thine ear is shrilled
The futile challenge of our childish "why";
Haply the clouds thy mercy have distilled
On the great deep that, where wrecked seamen lie
Haggard and spent and with night-watches chilled,
Of thirst on their frail raft they should not die.

WINTER SOLSTICE.

THE huddled clouds above the hill
Close darkly down; from dripping trees
The brown leaves flutter to the rill
And hush their summer symphonies.

Chill is the morn; a wandering breath
Of frost and silence in the night
Steals forth with solemn hints of death,
And fills the world with vague affright.

Yet when the rude north's bitter scath
Breaks wildly round the smitten year,
To earth, despite the winter's wrath,
The sun draws nearer and more near.

Thus when, through black portents of doom,
The heart grows sick with dread and dole,
All unperceived amid the gloom
Kind heaven draws nearer to the soul.

THE CAGED BIRD.

O SOUL, fret not against thy bars;
Thou art a caged and weary thing;
Above thee calmly wheel the stars
And night's vast psalm forever sing.

Sing thou, nor let the dying light,
Nor trooping shadows, dim and long,
Nor ghostly mists that veil thy sight,
Affray thy faith, and hush thy song.

The twilight deepens—be at rest;
Now fold thy bruised and drooping wing;
And till at length this prisoning breast
Shall burst and free thee, bravely sing.

THE CALL OF HOME.

Yea, Lord, if it could be, if it could be,
That I might leave the weariness and pain
Of this sad exile o'er the soundless main,
Whose restless waters roll 'twixt me and Thee;
If—while the day grows wan and shadowy,
And, like a conqueror amid the slain,
Night moves with lordly footsteps o'er the plain—
Death's sudden messenger should come to me
With summons to depart, I should not go
As one to whom the journey were a fear,
But I should gladly leave earth's mimic show,
And these dim ways which are so chill and drear,
And 'mid green fields, where living waters flow,
Fare homeward after many a weary year.

THE STRICKEN KING.

The summer sunshine, through the tremulous leaves,
Along the marble floor sowed its bright gules
Where in his chamber lay the stricken king,
Wasted, and hollow-eyed, and touched with death.
About him learned leeches, brought from far,
Hovered to count each sterterous sigh, each slow
And fitful pulse-beat, for no potion soothed
The mortal anguish of his malady.
Then were the secrets of the oracle
Consulted, and a solemn voice was heard
Declaring that whene'er the king should clothe
His pain-racked body in the shirt of one
Whose happiness was perfect, from his flesh
The torment should depart, and health once more
Flush his wan cheek. So through the kingdom went
The heralds diligently forth, but found
None in whose cup of joy no bitter drop
Was intermingled. Some in secret pined
From very fullness of delight, since naught
Was left to wish for; some in wantonness
Dashed in the dust their honeyed chalices,
That thus a subtler pleasure they might know
In striving to regain the perished sweet.
Discouraged in their quest, the pursuivants,
Weary and heavy-hearted, homeward turned
Their careworn faces. In a dewy vale,
Where the cool shadows of the mountains lay,
And a clear stream made all the solitude
Glad with its song, a snowy-bearded man,
Calm-browed and gentle, leaned upon a staff,
Midway a mossy bridge. The dusty band,
Drooping their banners, halted, and once more,
Languid and hopeless, made their mission known.

Amazed they listened while the reverend man
Confessed he knew no want, no grief, no loss,
And that his happiness was as a sun
Whose fair effulgence not a cloud distained.

Then from his horse the captain leaped, and prayed
The white-haired one to doff his shirt and send
The garment for the healing of the king.
Slowly the wrinkled hands were raised to loose
The fastening of the tattered cloak, when, lo!
The light of day smote on the naked breast
And the nude shoulders of the aged man
Whom poverty denied a shirt to wear.

CONSIDER THE LILIES.

Consider the lilies, O my heart,
Poor heart, so slow, so late to learn!
Thou more than meat and raiment art;
Wilt thou still earthward yearn?

Consider the lilies, how they grow;
O heart, they neither toil nor spin,
Yet they are clad in robes like snow;
Art thou as pure within?

Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass,
Shall He not clothe thee, as He saith?
Clothe thee upon with righteousness,
O thou of little faith?

Behold the small fowls of the air,
They sow not, neither do they reap,
They take no thought, no carking care,
They neither watch nor weep;

And yet the Father feedeth these—
O heart, where is thy boasted trust?
No more of sloth or doubting ease;
Arise from out the dust!

Go, get thee to thy work again;
Know thou that verily in the Lord
Thy labor cannot be in vain:
Thou shalt have thy reward.

No sparrow falleth to the earth
Without the Father, and thou art
Than many sparrows of more worth,
O faithless, foolish heart!

Therefore take thou no anxious thought;
Thy strength shall still be as thy day;
The birds and lilies have not wrought,
But thou art more than they.

HOMEWARD.

For what unguessed, late prize I strove so long,
I know not; lo! my striving now is past;
For that the battle is not to the strong,
Nor the race to the swift, I've learned at last.

I know not whither winds the path I tread,
Nor what the goal that I shall reach at length,
When I no more shall eat this bitter bread,
Nor quaff this cruse of tears, to nourish strength.

Unto what purpose have I bared my arms
For tasks that grew more irksome day by day,
Or kept my life safe from the lurking harms
That round my steps in cunning ambush lay?

Yet I have learned in every perilous place
That somewhere still, unseen, His watchers wait;
That each dark path leads to the Father's face,
The smile of welcome and the open gate.

THE COMING OF THE KING.

Silent the sleeping hills!

Silent the large cool night!

Far eastward, where the morn first spills

Its fires, a little light

Kindles athwart the dark.

Through heaven's wide concave, hark!

Mid star-sprent spaces vast and dim

Rolls a majestic hymn

Above a wailing Babe whose silken hair

Presses a rude and strawy pillow where

Patient, uncomprehending oxen stare.

Clap all your hands, ye hills! be glad, ye skies!

O longed-for Splendor, bless the anxious eyes

Of weary watchers, waiting in the night

The dawning of the long-expected Light;

Doff, breathless world, thy starry diadem,

And welcome now the Babe of Bethlehem.

Ah, stupid eyes close sealed in selfish sleep!

Ah, stolid ears long dulled with slumber deep!

Ye ne'er may know again

A night like this; the stars begin to wane

Already, and the chorus of the skies

Withdraws far up the azure cope and dies.

The morn shall break, as it hath done before,

For you, but never, never more

Such wonders shall be known.

E'en now the night is o'er;

Behold! the King hath come unto his own.

PATIENCE.

O God, I pray Thee give me quietude,
Though it be midst the wrecks of broken years;
Scatter Thou from mine eyes the blinding tears,
And cool the burning fever in my blood.
Lo! I am swept away as with a flood;
My soul is beaten on by stormy fears;
I cannot see, and ever through mine ears
Surge empty echoes of the solitude.
O, teach me to be patient and to wait;
Teach me to quell that spirit in my breast
Which irks the slow-paced hours, and cries, "Too
late!"
Urge on my heart this lesson—that 'twere best
To suffer even to death "without the gate,"
If so my soul might enter into rest.

WHEN I HAVE LIVED MY LIFE.

When I have lived my life, and death at last
Draws the sweet breath from out my white, cold lips;
When o'er my fixed, faint eyes the swift eclipse
Of dissolution draws, and thick and fast
The shadows no man knows crowd up the vast
Dim vista of eternity; when dips
My final sun from sight, and darkness slips
Upon me, quenching utterly the past;
Then while fond friends around me weep and pray,
And come to kiss their last kiss, one by one,—
Ere yet hath faded quite the light of day,
And ere my mortal sands are fully run,—
God, grant that I may hear one dear Voice say,
With love and tenderness, "Well done! well done!"

THE HUMAN NEED.

Along the snow-fed rivers of the north
Ne'er waves a flower, or fern, or fronded palm;
There every frosty stream and frozen firth,
Lies locked in white, unchanging, icy calm.

But where the spice-winds fan the orange groves,
And trailing vines sway as the waters sway,
Is heard the sound of many a voice that loves,
Fluting its song through all the happy day.

O God, if in thy Heaven, where all is pure,
Peace shall infold us like a polar sea,
Here in this changeful world let me endure,
Where still warm human love can come to me.

THE ADVENT.

The darkness folds the sleeping world;
The stars are quiet in the skies;
The low moon, like a feather curled,
Upon the faint horizon lies.

About his sheep-cote on the hill
The weary shepherd paces slow;
Within, the huddled flock is still;
Without, the frost-winds shrewdly blow.

Ah, breathless hour of hopes and fears!
Hark! through the solemn midnight hush,
From myriad sudden-brightening spheres,
A million quiring voices rush.

Yea, sing, ye trembling morning stars!
With music break the awful spell;
O Phosphor, burst your radiant bars,
And burn o'er Bethlehem's lowly cell!

But hark! above cherubic hymn,
More clear than anthem of the sky,
Up from yon stable, rude and dim,
Quavers an Infant's feeble cry.

O earth, be glad, thine hour hath come!
O happy winds, the tidings tell!
Clap all your hands, ye forests dumb!
Ye mountains, hail Immanuel!

Now shall the ways of men be blest;
Now from the world shall lift the night;
From north to south, from east to west,
Shall stream the ever-growing light.

Let every sound of sorrow cease,
And Eden's songs be heard again;
O'er all the earth henceforth be peace,
And evermore good will to men.

THE LOVE UNSPEAKABLE.

"For God so loved the world"—O love divine!

Love which our human hearts but faintly feel;
Love whose vast depth no uttered words reveal;
Love which makes light in this dark soul of mine;
Behold! we know thee by this awful sign—

A cross whereon large drops of blood congeal,
A rock-hewn sepulcher, a shattered seal,
And a full cup with bitter tears for wine!
O love unspeakable! Dear love of God!

Love manifest in measureless sacrifice,
Teach us to walk the way which Christ hath trod,
Though sands should scorch our feet, and on our eyes
Smite the fierce desert sun, and briers prod
Our shrinking flesh—till suffering makes us wise.

"WHERE ARE THE NINE?"

There were ten that were cleansed, but only one
Returned to praise the Lord;
There were ten that were cleansed, but one alone
Uttered the grateful word.

How oft in the night, on the wind-swept slope,
While happy men had slept,
In his desolate soul hope after hope
Had died with the tears he wept.

He had wandered far, and his sick heart yearned
For the vanished joys of home;
Though the way was rough, and the hot sun burned,
Still must the leper roam.

But a glorious purpose, sudden and sweet,
Flooded with light his soul;
He hastened to the Great Healer's feet,
Crying to be made whole.

And others were there, and the dust like smoke,
Rose where the ten men kneeled;
And the kind Eyes saw, and the calm Voice spoke,
And the lepers all were healed.

And they turned and fled, for their joy was great,
But the Healer they gave no heed;
While only the stranger thought to wait,
To praise Christ's loving deed.

Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the
nine?"

The rebuke is ours today,
For we who were healed at the touch divine
Still go our thankless way.

"THOUGH HE SLAY ME".

When these hot pulses cease, O Lord, and all
The fever and the strife at last are done;
When, for my feet, the race is well out-run,
And, spent and weary, from the list I fall;
When, deaf to passion's cry and duty's call,
And reckless of the honors lost or won,
I turn my forehead toward the setting sun,
Calm and content to leave the world's rude brawl—
Then, Lord, for the sweet pity which Thou hast
Of those who, heavy-laden, worn with pain,
From out the conflict desolate and vast,
Cry unto Thee for help, nor cry in vain,
Grant to forget my weak and wandering past,
And help me trust Thee, though my life be slain.

NOT IN VAIN.

Away from the haunts of men, from the feverish, godless
strife

Waged in the noisy marts, I fled to the templed wood;
My eyes were dim with tears, I was sick of the cheat
called "life,"

And the venom of hatred swept like flame through all
my blood.

Where the gloom of the wood was deepest I cast me
prone on the ground,

And covered my face from the day, and wished it were
all at an end,

When suddenly up from the earth, like the beating of
hearts, came a sound,

And over me, patient and pure I saw a violet bend.

And my anger that fiercely smoked was quenched as I
gazed on the flower;

I knew that God was near, though veiled was His
luminous form;

And down on my troubled heart fell the healing dew
of His power,

And I learned that our lives not in vain are bowed
like reeds in the storm.

IN THE STORM.

Lord, now the light hath vanished, be Thou near;
Within the awful darkness may we hear
The reassuring words that Thou dost speak
Across the swelling waters. We are weak;
Still at the laboring oars we toil and strain,
And thro' the waste, void night we peer in vain
For any beacon. Every star hath fled,
And the hoarse thunder bellows overhead;
Our shuddering craft is driven to and fro,
As the fierce billows smite it, blow on blow;
The tempest o'er us loud and louder raves,
Beneath us wider yawn the gulping waves.
O be Thou near! Uplift Thy voice of peace,
And bid the elemental conflict cease;
Disperse the shadows from the shrouded skies,
And bless with morning light our longing eyes!
Across the angry surges send Thy word;
O speak and save us, or we perish, Lord.

THE YIELDED WILL.

Lord, I would bow my stricken head and say,
 "Thy will be done!"
I know that o'er this same sad, weary way
 Thou, too, hast gone.
Oh, where Thou leadest let me follow still,
Through all this poor dim life of mine, until
 My sands be run.

I have been smitten, but not from the ground
 My sorrows rose;
Thou e'er hast balmed at length my deepest wound,
 And made my woes—
Ah, passing strange!—like oil to cheer my head;
For me, too, Thou a table oft hast spread
 Before my foes.

Though Thou shouldst humble me unto the dust,
 Thy will be done!
Lo, take me, make me, break me—Thou art just,
 O Holy One!
On this marred clay Thine image stamp divine;
Rise through the night and on my darkness shine;
 O Morning Sun!

EASTER MORNING.

Three days the barrowed earth had swept
 Across the star-sown gulfs of space,
Since she beside that grave had wept
 Which hid her first-born's sinless face;
Her heart was dark, her lamp was quenched,
 Her fluttering hope untimely dead,
And night by night her sorrow drenched
 The fevered pillow at her head.

Then as the dark began to wane,
 And Easter morn within the skies
Its rose of promise set again,
 Sleep fell upon her weary eyes;
And as she slept a vision came;
 It smiled, and lightly clasped her hand,
And swiftly moved, on feet of flame,
 Past many a strange and tropic land.

Far eastward through the gates of dawn,
By paths of pearl, 'mid golden mists,
Where strewn o'er many a dewy lawn
Burn diamonds and amethysts,
Straight on into the rising day
She followed still her flying dream,
To where with festal sounds alway
The springs of glory downward stream;

Where throb the songs that never cease,
Where dip the laurel and the palm,
Where lilies of eternal peace
Breathe airs that blow from hills of balm;
Where garmented in praise One stands
Than light more radiantly fair,
And, joy of joys! Whose piercèd hands
Lie on her darling's shining hair.

O mother-love! O pure delight!
O eyes that brim with blissful tears!
Behind her dies the barren night,
Behind her sink the widowed years;
She listened, and a dear Voice spake:
"Be comforted, thou stricken one,
The bruised reed I ne'er will break"—
She woke, and saw the Easter sun.

WHEN NIGHT IS PAST.

Ah, when the night is past, and morning breaks
Above the hills, and from the pastures gray
The folded mists steal silently away,
And every leaf its flashing jewels shakes;
When on the grass the dews burst into flakes
Of golden fire beneath the streaming day,—
Then from each vocal copse, and shrub, and spray
A ringing sound of exultation wakes.
So, Love, when death's chill night at length is done,
And from the couches we have pressed so long
We rise beneath the uncreated Sun,
Whose glory cloud nor gloom shall ever wrong,
For us Heaven's heights shall kindle, one by one,
And on our ears shall strike a sweet, new song.

LABORARE EST ORARE.

Yea, "work is worship," said that hoary man,
Who o'er the wintry sea, from his froze height
Of four-score years and six, with ageless sight
Watched still the bodeful struggle in the van
Of the world's progress; for he did not scan
The fray as one who had not tried the fight,
But as one who had battled for the right,
And freed his own soul from the coward's ban.
Yea, work is worship, work that's one with pain;
Work born of consecration and of trust;
Work wrought with bruised hand and weary brain,
Consenting to the meager cup and crust:
Such work is worship; 'tis not counted vain;
God marks His toilers by their sweat and dust.

“YE HAVE DONE IT UNTO ME”

Lord, I was hungry, and Thou gav'st me meat;
Yea, blessed Lord, to me Thou gavest wine,
And corn, and oil, and bread whereof to eat,
And madest me an honored guest of Thine.

I was athirst, dear Lord, and Thou didst lead
My footsteps whither cooling waters flow,
Through many a shady wood and dewy mead,
Where spicy winds from isles of morning blow.

I was a stranger, Lord, footsore and sad,
And weary with long journeys from far lands,
But Thou didst take me in and make me glad,
And lavedst my bruised feet with loving hands.

Lord, I was naked and Thou clothedst me,
As lilies are, in raiment pure and white;
Thou tookest from me shame and poverty,
And didst exalt me in the people's sight.

And I was sick, Lord, nigh consumed of sin,
And all my life was vexed with heaviness
And sharp distress, but Thou didst gently win
My soul to health, and peace, and righteousness.

In prison, Lord, I lay, but Thou didst come
And soothe me as I languished day and night,
Nor wast Thou grieved that my poor lips were dumb
And could not tell my gratitude aright.

Ah, Thou wast ever better than my fears!
And though, for all Thy mercies, gracious Lord,
I bring Thee now but empty hands and tears,
Yet even these may gain love's sweet reward.

THE GOLDEN AGE.

The morn bursts on us with a song;
Night's sable wings are furled;
The golden age, awaited long,
Dawns on the weary world.
Now hoary wrongs shall righted be,
Love's fillet bind each brow,
While Peace the dove, o'er land and sea,
Shall bear the olive bough.

Lo, watching eyes, bedimmed with tears,
With happiness grow bright;
And hearts oppressed with gloomy fears,
Unfold to catch the light.
Let every tongue its silence break;
No more let battles rage;
While valleys, plains, and hills awake
To greet the golden age.

Roll swiftly up, O joyful day,
Flood all the heavens serene;
The places where foul dragons lay,
With rushes shall be green;
The lion and the leopard wild
No more shall maim nor kill,
While o'er God's mount a little child
Shall lead them where he will.

RISEN.

Ere yet the shadowy mountain tops
Were silvered with the light,
Or off the lilies slipped the drops
Won from the dewy night;
Ere yet the morning's incense curled
O'er glimmering Galilee,
The grave had yielded to the world
Its awful mystery.

Through all the night the pallid stars
Watched trembling o'er the tomb,
And Olivet wrapped all its scars
Deep in the fragrant gloom;
The world one instant held its breath,
When from the flashing heaven
God's angel swept, more strong than death,
And death's dark bonds were riven.

Forth from the sepulcher's embrace
Behold the Conqueror come!
O morning sun, unveil thy face!
O earth, no more be dumb!
From century to century
The pæan now shall ring—
O grave, where is thy victory?
O death, where is thy sting?

THE QUEST.

I journeyed far to see the King; my days
I spent in weary quests; by lonely tarns,
In populous cities, in the wilderness,
Where the gaunt mountains lift their hoary fronts,
And where the deserts spread their shifting sands,
Wandered my fruitless steps. For I was fain
To see Him in His splendor, His august
And gracious presence making all the place
Of His enthronement radiant with light.
His voice, full fraught with power, I deemed should be
More sweet than falling waters heard afar,
Or the warm night-winds whispering in the pines;
His luminous eyes beneath His placid brows
Star-clear should calmly beam on all alike;
And from the dais where His feet were set
Refreshing streams of influence should flow
To drooping lives. Thus day by day I sought
To come where He might be, but evermore
The morrow found me still a wayfarer;
Till, spent and gray, I turned my hopeless feet
Down the small street where stood my empty home,
And there I found Him waiting at my door.
Not clothed in purple, but in raiment stained
And travel-worn; His feet were bare; His head
Was meekly bowed, and on His wasted cheek
Were traces as of tears. Within His hands
He held no scepter, but a palmer's staff;
Yet, as I looked, I knew He was the King,
For round His brow was girt a crown of thorns.

SUBMISSION.

Lord, hast thou for me still some poignant cup,
Some austere pathway my bruised feet must tread,
Some bitter herbs whereon I yet must sup,
Some salt tears still wherein to steep my bread?

I am not wise, and O, my knees are faint,
My hands hang down, my soul is parched with drouth;
Oft to thee have I made my sore complaint,
And filled with fiery arguments my mouth.

Now will I hold my peace at thy command,
And to thee yield my life in patient trust;
Yea, I will be the worm within thy hand
Wherewith thou beatest mountains into dust.

“AS RAIN ON THE MOWN GRASS”

On drooping lives He shall descend
As on the mown grass fall the showers,
Or as the healing dews by night
Upon the thirsty flowers.

The dreary desert shall rejoice;
Our days, so profitless and vain,
Shall bud and blossom with delight
Beneath God's fruitful rain.

Open thy windows, gracious Lord,
On us the promised blessing pour,
Till the parched gardens of our hearts
Stream with thy love once more.

THE REST.

"There remaineth therefore a rest
To the people of God," it is said;
Make answer, O earth, is it in thy cool breast?
O grave, do they rest who are dead?

"There remaineth therefore a rest
To the people of God"; can it be
Far under thy foam-white, wind-blown crest?
'Tell us, O restless sea!

"A rest to God's people"; O Love!
O Christ, to Thy pitiful breast,
Could we borrow the wings of the home-flying dove,
We would haste and so enter our rest.

Yea, soul! "there remaineth a rest";
So be it. The sweet lilies grow,
And they toil not, they spin not, and yet they are blest:
Why fret we? God's people shall know.

THE DIVINE ASSURANCE.

My child, seek not to understand, for now
Thine eyes are holden, and thou canst not see
The hand that guides; I know the rugged way
Up which thou toilest wearily and alone.
The darkness shall not fright thee; I will keep
Thy feet from falling when thy dizzy sight
Looks down the stark abyss; the noonday sun
Shall scorch thee not, for I will be thy shade.
Out of the cloud I will speak unto thee

When thy heart faileth and the bitter tears
Are salt upon thy lips. Lo! on my hands
Thy name is graven, nor can I forget
The thing that I have made; yea, let this be
Thine inmost comforting—that round thee lies
The mystery of my love that cannot cease,
The fulness of my power that cannot fail,
My patience, boundless as eternity.

ON JUDAH'S HILLS.

On Judah's hills the shadows lie;
Heaven's frosty diadem
Of clustered stars is burning high
O'er sleeping Bethlehem.

Lo, countless wings flash on the night,
And hark! celestial strains
Pour down the glory-circled height,
O'er all the slumbering plains.

Sing, sing, ye white-robed heralds, sing!
In yonder narrow shed,
Straw-pillowed lies your Lord and King
Upon his lowly bed.

Moriah, lift thy radiant crest;
O Judah, be not dumb!
Messiah nestles on thy breast,
The Prince of Peace hath come.

“LIKE AS WE ARE”.

All night, with fevered eyes, I lay and stared
Upon the darkness while my sorrow bled;
Till, 'twixt the twilight and the rose-flushed day,
I slept, and sleeping dreamed that I had died.
Amid the little stars, that past me rained
Like sparks shot downward, swiftly I was borne
Unto the very Presence. With crossed wings
And haloed foreheads, round me circle-wise
Stood heaven's pure spirits. "Thou art hither brought,"
He spake upon whose face I dared not look,
"That from what tribulation thou art come,
Being made perfect, thou mayst now declare."
So with bowed head and quivering touch I drew
The vestments from my bosom, whence slow dropped
Big tears of blood. "Behold," I faintly said,
"Not hatred's, but love's, bitter stroke." Whereat
From out the utter glory welled a Voice
More thrilling sweet than music, and a Form,
Sun-clothed and with a golden girdle cinct,
Moved downward to me. "Fear not, child," He breathed
"I am thy Brother, and I know thy woe;"
And as His fingers twined about my own,
I saw His hand was wounded, and my gaze,
Daring at length to travel upward, marked
The spear-thrust in His side. Then all at once
I knew Him—knew His crown of twisted thorns,
And, poring on the mystery of His eyes,
I knew love's holiest Victim, and I wept;
But He, low murmuring, clasped me to His breast,
And as a mother cherisheth her babe,
On my abashed brow He set a kiss.

COMPENSATION.

Round each far peak,
Austere and bleak,
Snow-laden clouds are hanging;
The long white fields are dumb with frost where rang
the whetted scythe;
O'er ice-bound brooks,
In leafless nooks,
Sweeps by with cymbals clanging
The charging blast, while all the wind-tossed branches
clash and writhe.

But somewhere breathe,
Through vines that wreath
The aisles with starry blossoms,
Sweet airs that stir the sleeping pools and kiss the
drowsy flowers;
There safe at rest,
In each soft nest,
Are huddled tiny bosoms,
While o'er the moss sift flickering gules of sunlight
through calm hours.

Look up, O soul!
Though o'er thee roll
Long days of clouds and shadows,
And through dark months of mist and gloom no golden
rays outstream,
Yet light shall rise
To glad thine eyes,
Like sunshine on green meadows,
When bursts from out its wintry grave the splendor of
thy dream.

"FOR SO HE GIVETH HIS BELOVED SLEEP".

Not yet, my child, not yet the twilight falleth;
Not yet the sun sinks in the darkling west;
Not yet from the gray fields the cricket calleth;
Fold not thine hands, 'tis not yet time to rest.

Still weary labor plies its ringing hammers;
Still the forge reddens and the wheels go round;
Still the thronged market lifts its deafening clamors,
And iron hoofs of traffic smite the ground.

At the stern task a little longer tarry;
Mid sordid cares the vision sweet still keep;
The burden old a little longer carry;
Then the night cometh with its healing sleep.

A MORNING ORISON.

Somewhere the morning breaks; the crescent light
Floods all the valleys with an aureate stream;
A glory lies on the unpeopled height;—
O Lord, on me let thine effulgence beam.

Now from the leafy privacies outrings
The concord of the feathered minstrelsy;—
Oh, may my being's praise, like smitten strings,
'Tremble, dear Lord, in music up to thee.

From the veined cups of the awakened flowers
Rises a dewy perfume, sweet and rare;—
Lord, let my spirit's unconjectured powers
Breathe upward to thee daily like a prayer.

The thrifty bee, already on its quest,
Seeks to and fro some nectared treasure-trove;—
Lord, in the inviolate chambers of my breast
Garner a harvest of unstinting love.

Oh, while the young day brightens o'er the earth,
And smiling peace infolds the happy land,
Let faith in every bosom find its birth,
And hope and charity go hand in hand.

VIA CRUCIS.

Though wild the way, and though my feet be bleeding,
And sullen skies with clouds be overcast,
I'll follow thee, my Master, all unheeding,
For this rude path shall lead me home at last.

What though I stumble oft mid thorns most bitter?—
Thorns yet more cruel pierced thine aching brow;
Ah me! dear Master, surely it were fitter
That I should wear that shameful crown than thou.

Dark are the mountains, and the shadows dreary,
Yet darker, Lord, I know was Calvary;
My brain is with the midnight watches weary,
Yet thou, O Lord, hadst thy Gethsemane.

Ah, Master, gentle Master, uncomplaining
Thou wearest thy scarlet robe, and bearest the blight
Of thy huge cross, though thy bruised flesh be paining
Still with the scourge's unrelenting spite.

And I—I cannot bear the lightest sorrow
But that I murmur, and with anxious eyes
Wait fretfully for the desired tomorrow
When I shall fare beyond earth's troubled skies.

O Lord, clothe thou with peace my restless spirit,
That I may be thy strong and patient son,
And, when life shall be life at last, inherit
Their blest estate of whom 'tis said, "Well done".

AT BETHLEHEM.

The Syrian stars are burning low;
The winds are laid, the night is still;
The waking shepherd paces slow
About his sheep-cote on the hill;
And oft he turns to watch the skies
With wistful, dim, sleep-burdened eyes.

Still closer creep the huddled flocks
Within the shelter of the fold;
The hoar-frost whitens on the rocks,
The thin grass stiffens with the cold;
Still slowly, o'er the shadowy ground,
The shepherd foots his weary round.

Hist! over Bethlehem's sleeping town
What sudden strains outleap and swell?
Behold! a star sinks slowly down
And glows above one lowly cell
Where lies a mother, wan and pale,
Hushing her new-born Infant's wail.

Lo! far along the flashing cope
Gleam angel forms with folded wings;
A strange light silvers every slope,
And through the vault of heaven rings
This song, again and yet again,
"On earth be peace, good will to men."

O tired mother, take thy rest!
O Judah's hills, awake and shout!
And from the east and from the west
Let voices of the vales break out,
To hail the Babe whose feet shall press
The world's dark ways to save and bless.

AND THE WORLD KNEW HIM NOT.

Love's gentle footsteps pressed earth's dusty ways,
And no man heeded. In the market-place
Love's voice was drowned amid the clamors loud
Of traffic. By the couch of death Love knelt,
But fading eyes perceived not. Oft Love sought
At palace gates for adit, and was spurned
Alike by lord and vassal. Kings were deaf
To Love's clear accents, and at temple doors
None gathered where Love stood and proffered gifts
Freely to all—to beggar, prince and priest.
Then with bowed head and drooping mien Love climbed
A street that straggled up a stony hill,
Where dozed a little town amid its shrubs,
And there at play beheld a sun-browned lad
With serious eyes. Love clasped his slender hand,
And led him forth. Anon his youthful face
Shone on grave elders, in a marble court,
Who listened with amazement to the words
Which from the boy's pure lips dropped like fine pearls.
Love blessed his secret growth, and as he went
Humbly from toil to toil, or o'er his bench
Bent softly singing at his task, Love's heart
Was glad. Now through the crowded mart Love guides
His patient feet, and where the stricken throng
Upreach beseeching hands Love sees him touch
The maimed, the blind, the leprous—healing all.
At noonday, hunger-spent and travel-stained,
He sits beside a well, the while he speaks
The tender solemn words of truth that save
A ruined life. All beauteous, gracious things,
Birds and fresh blooms, green grass and flowing streams,
All simple, sinless, self-forgetting souls,
Young children breathing still the air of heaven,

Heart-broken mothers, daughters crushed with shame,
Care-burdened men, forlorn, outcast, oppressed,
To these he turned, and Love was well content,
Yet paused not weary grown. Then fell a night,
Starless and heavy, when Love saw him bow
In bitter anguish, and his desolate cry
Shattered the silence where the olives spread
Compassionate boughs above him, and great drops
Of sanguine sweat coursed down his wasted cheeks.
Nor did Love shrink when, o'er his quivering flesh
Again and yet again the knotted scourge
Hissed writhing, when the mocking crown of thorns
Tortured his brow, and when beneath his woe
He onward reeled, mid ribald oaths and jests,
To where gray rocks rose naked as a skull.
And there they nailed him to the ruthless tree,
Mangled his hands and feet, and gashed his side
With lance-like spear above his breaking heart.
O Love ineffable! O blenchless Love!
At last we know thee—God's interpreter.
Though thou wast scorned, yet thou dost stand e'en now
Beside that piteous cross, with outstretched arms
Wooring with tearful smiles a grave-sown world.

LIFE TRIUMPHANT.

No scepter sways the dumb and wrinkled earth
But Death's; a monarch he whose hoar domain
Is boundless; silent in his equal train
Meet king and kern alike—love's austere worth
And folly's crapulous shame; no thought of birth,
Of proud or base degree, he taketh; vain
He marks all scutcheons, and with calm disdain
He rends all bonds of blood. By every hearth;
In every pure and sweet and precious spot
By human service to man's heart made dear;
By boreal firths of ice, and by the hot
And stagnant waters of the torrid mere,
He hath his subjects. Death!—where is he not?
Where droppeth not the desolate, desperate tear?

II.

A rain-washed barrow in some byway green;
A crumbling tablet sculptured like a cross;
A piteous name beleaguered sore with moss,
And all else tongueless that we once have been:
O life, flame-winged, is this what thou dost mean?
Are all thy gains consumed in one huge loss?
Is all thy finèd gold but dust and dross?
Is there no seed immortal thou mayst glean
Amid the waste of tares where thou dost toil?
Ah, for the arid years of wrong and ruth,
Of weariness and woe, while ever moil
The pain-scourged sons of time,—yea, for the truth
That bitter is the bread wrung from the soil
In tears,—is there no meed but death, forsooth?

III.

What lies beyond? Our tremulous questioning
Falls answerless on the un pitying air;
Earth hath no snow-crowned seer to say how fare
Those souls 'twixt whom and us forever swing
The unsunned valves of night. No throbbing wing
Of angel e'er hath fanned our cheek. O where,
To what cloud-girdled realm, 'mid love-lights rare,
Do our dear travellers go a-journeying?
No solemn voice hath reached us from the tomb;
No spectral hand hath touched us from the dead;
No beacon cleaves the void and icy gloom;
No word of solace dissipates our dread;
All, all is darkness—darkness, silence, doom:
Whither—ah, whither!—have our heart-twins fled?

IV.

The blind lead not the blind: who shall lead thee,
Thou orphaned spirit? Whither thou dost go,
Thou canst not guess; around thee ever flow,
As round its islands the importunate sea,
The mysteries of life and death. No key
Is thine to open life's shut doors; for lo!
Amid the years thou gropest to and fro,
Thyself unto thyself a mystery.
Ah, soul! thy seeking hands can never touch
A substance that endures: the shadows fade,
As shadows will, within thy very clutch,
And of the anguished efforts thou hast made
Thou reapest naught but mockery over-much:
Yea, fleeting soul, thou, too, art but a shade.

V.

Wherein is life? Lo, sun and moon and stars
Are perishing. The valleys and wide hills
Are clothed with death. The winds and plaining rills
Chant evermore a dirge to dying Mars—
Dying amid the never-ended wars
’Twixt light and darkness. Dissolution fills
The vanishing universe. Life ever kills
The life it makes. Earth’s sanguine avatars
Are gods that slay the creatures of their breath,
To slake their mortal lust with stanchless blood.
Oh, where and what is life? Who is it saith,
“I am the life?”—o’er Whom rolled the red flood
Of the last agony. Life!—life is death:
Yea, flickering soul, death is thine only good.

VI.

Nay, hearken to thine own voice, O my soul!
What though the raving blasts dismay thee here?
Despite each poignant pang and breathless fear,
Despite the lampless darkness and the dole,
Thy tabernacle shall o’erspan the goal
Of sweet desire; pain never shall come near
Thy dwelling-place, nor any longing tear
Vex thy clear vision while God’s eons roll.
Lo! countless tongues from the perpetual hills,
And myriad voices from the vaulted sky,
And the vast deep whose world-wide whisper thrills
The pulses of the listening spheres on high,
Mingle their accents in a sound that fills
The caves of death, “Behold, thou shalt not die.”

VII.

We shall attain—yea, though this dust shall fail,
And though all evil things conspire to bind
The struggling soul with gyves of sense, and blind
Our faith with clay, and though all foes assail
To utterly destroy us, yet from wail,
From misery and from doubt, from all unkind
False hopes, and from the dwarfed and prisoned
mind,
We shall attain to life beyond the veil.
Yea, though 'tis written that all flesh is grass,
Which springeth up at morn and flourisheth,
And which at even, when th' inverted glass
Is emptied of its sands, fades as the breath
The dew-lipped rose sighs on the winds that pass,—
Yet in our frailty we shall conquer death.

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